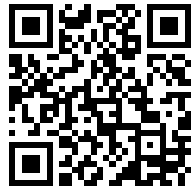
This is a reproduction of a library book that was digitized by Google as part of an ongoing effort to preserve the information in books and make it universally accessible.

Google™ books

https://books.google.com



AISLE 45

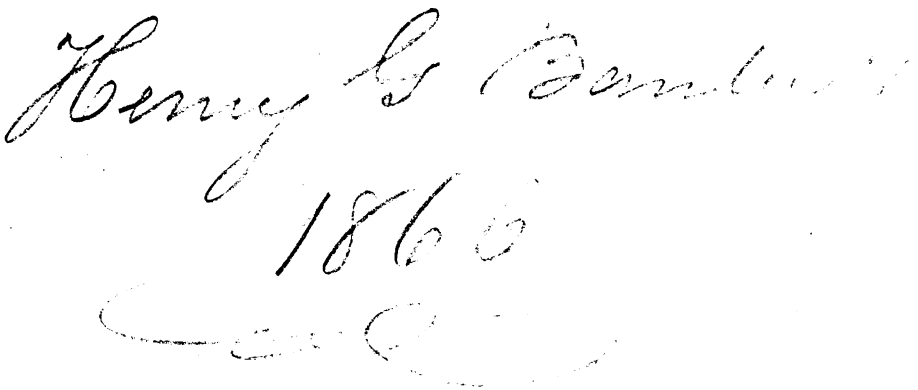
Digitized by Google

THE LIBRARY

Periodical Collection
CLASS

BOOK

Digitized by Google



Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

PROPHETIC TIMES.

A Monthly Serial,

DEVOTED TO THE EXPOSITION AND INCULCATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPEEDY COMING AND REIGN OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND RELATED SUBJECTS.

EDITED BY

REV. DRS. SEISS, NEWTON, DUFFIELD, AND OTHERS.

VOL. III.

"For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."—HEB. 10: 26, 27.

PHILADELPHIA:
SHERMAN & CO., PRINTERS.
1865.

Digitized by Google

"Behold, I come quickly."

REV. 22 : 12.

"FAITH has saved us, and the power of God keeps us in the faith and in Jesus Christ; but hope makes us grow and go forward and heavenward. Whilst the world hastens on to judgment in the pursuit of corruptible things, the Church, on the contrary, goes on towards glory. We ought, therefore, to attach ourselves every day more firmly to heavenly and imperishable things, which we find only in Jesus, living, and coming again to introduce us into the mansions which he has prepared for us. If we pursue this end, we shall in this walk with those whom Scripture calls *perfect*, and our conduct here on earth will be consistent with what the conduct of the children of God ought to be, in proportion to the strength of our expectation of the Lord. It is, therefore, necessary that the hope of glory, consequent on our justification and adoption, should be vivid, and built up on the Word of God, in order that our testimony may be that of the heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

"Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

REV. 22 : 20.

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS OF VOLUME III.

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

	Page
Destiny of our Earth and Race,	1
Ideas of the Future,	3
Destiny of our Earth and Race (cont.),	17
Two Stages of the Resurrection of the Just,	19
Clippings of Items,	33
The Harvest of the Earth (Poetry),	37
Reasons for Praying for the Lord's Coming,	38
Destiny of our Earth and Race (cont.),	49
Jew and Gentile,	51
Destiny of our Earth and Race (cont.),	65
Thy Will be Done in Earth,	68
Smyrna and Ephesus,	81
The Abomination which maketh Desolate,	83
Napoleon's Name corrected in English,	87
From Smyrna to Beirout,	97
Clippings of Items,	99
A Sketch,	101
The Future of the Lost,	102
Beirout, Lycus, and Lebanon,	113
The Coming Man,	116
The Ages,	117
They who Love (Poetry),	118
The Eagles,	129
The Eagles (cont.),	145
Our Hope,	148
On the Study of Prophecy,	149
My Beloved is Mine (Poetry),	150
"In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin,"	150
Things to be Treasured,	151
Watch (Poetry),	151
The Old Error Repeated,	161
Thy Kingdom Come,	163
Ein Feste Burg (Poetry),	165
Luther on the Advent,	177
Literalness of the Kingdom,	180
"Where, Lord?"	182

SELECTIONS.

	Page
Jesus the True Sovereign,	4
The Coming Troubles,	8
The Morning Dawns (Poetry),	10
A Joyful Discovery,	10
Battle Song of the Church,	21
The Day of the Lord and His Forerunner,	22
The Judgment not Simultaneous,	39
("Thy Kingdom Come,")	43
Till He Come (Poetry),	45
The Duty of Watchfulness,	53
Reasons why Believers should Study Prophecy,	56
The Study of Prophecy,	69
The Year 1866,	72
Christ's Coming,	88
The Puritans of New England,	89
Our Times and our Churches,	103
The First Resurrection,	105
Charlotte Elizabeth,	107
As God Will (Poetry),	108
The New Dispensation,	119
Luther on Things to Come,	121
For What shall we Pray?	133
Expecting the Saviour,	152
Walking Worthy of the Lord,	154
Loving Christ's Appearing,	166
"The Wane of Faith,"	167
Are You Ready?	168
The Millennial Reign—The Belief of the Early Church,	183
The Manner of Christ's Coming,	186

979624

Digitized by Google

EDITORIALS.

	Page
The Present Aspect of Europe,	10
A Talk with our Readers about Common Things, No, 4,	14
Words from Europe,	25
A Talk with our Readers, No. 5,	30
Briefs on Prophetic Themes,	32
Talk with our Readers, No. 6,	46
Napoleon's Supremacy,	48
The World to Come,	59
Talk with our Readers, No. 7,	62
A Few Jottings,	73
Talk with our Readers, No. 8,	75
The Great Conflagration,	92
The Beginning and the End,	96
False Messiahs,	96
The Suez Canal,	108
Improvements in Palestine,	111
The Advent Doctrine,	122
The Wane of Faith,	126
Shimeall's New Book,	136
R. M. Dudley's Pamphlet,	139
The Wise Virgins. Who are They?	156
Napoleon III and the Jews,	160
Our Confidence and our Cause,	169
Pre-Millennialism,	171
What the World Thinks,	173
Who is the False Prophet?	176
How it Works,	178
The Transfiguration,	187
Miscellaneous Items,	191

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. JANUARY, 1865. No. 1.

Special Contributions.

THE DESTINY OF OUR EARTH AND RACE.

THIS theme was considered, to some extent, in two articles, contained in No. 8 and 9 of the first volume. The first article considered the antecedent probability that the earth should be continued forever, and the race cleansed and made holy; but yet in the flesh, as Adam was, in the day of his creation, should be allowed to perpetuate itself in successive generations through eternity. The second article argued, for the same view, from a comparison of the state of the earth and race as they *did* exist at the time described in the first two chapters of Genesis, with the state of each as it *will* exist at the time predicted in the last two chapters of the Revelation by St. John. Since then the writer has not been able to resume the consideration of the subject. He desires now to do so; and in carrying out this purpose would call attention to some of those passages of Scripture which seem most clearly to sustain the view in question. It may be remarked before proceeding, that in regard to a matter lying so entirely in the future, and so *far* in the future, and not being, in any sense a saving or fundamental truth, it is not to be expected that we should be able to adduce in its support, any very decided and absolute statements of Scripture. No definite and absolute, "Thus saith the Lord," can be quoted on such a subject. We can only look to see it plainly implied. If we can show that it is a clear inference from certain passages of Scripture, and that these passages cannot be fairly and satisfactorily explained without admitting the idea now contended for, then we have all the Scripture evidence we have any right to expect on such a subject.

The first passage to which I would refer, as bearing on this point, is Genesis 22 : 17. Here, in the promise made to Abraham God says, "I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand upon the sea-shore." Now there are figures which imply numbers without limit. And the figures which God employs in Scripture to illustrate His truth and His promises, never overstep the limits of the truth illustrated. The truth is always greater than the figure. If there is failure anywhere, it is always the figure that fails. The sand upon the sea-shore represents either an infinite number, or a number so nearly approaching the infinite, that we cannot distinguish the one from the other. It is a number which human arithmetic has no power to represent. But the descendants of Abraham have never reached any such number as this. Take the largest figures that have ever been used to represent the tribes of Israel when they were in their palmiest state as a nation. Multiply those figures by the number of generations which have existed on the earth since the day that Israel became a nation, down to the present day, and it will be a number very easily expressed and comprehended. Carry on the same calculation through any supposed number of years till the millennium comes. Do the same through all the years of that happy period, and the result will be the same. The number of Abraham's descendants will indeed be wonderfully augmented by the time this process

Digitized by Google

shall have been completed. Still it will be a number easily expressed. Any intelligent schoolboy would be able, easily, to write out the figures, to enumerate them, yes, and even to form an intelligent idea of them. But how different it is with the sand upon the sea-shore! In the work of calculating this, we may employ, not a schoolboy, but the most skilful master of mathematics. Employ, if you will, Sir Isaac Newton himself. Yet even *he* would find no formula invented by which he could give expression to the number of grains found in the sand upon the sea-shore. It is the next thing to infinity itself. But how shall the number of Abraham's descendants be made to equal or exceed the figure here employed to represent it, as God's truth always does exceed the illustrations given us of it? Destroy the earth, and cut off the race from continuing and perpetuating itself, after any given number of centuries, and you never can do this. But let the earth remain, and let the race, with Abraham's seed and name distinctly preserved, continue and prepetuate itself in successive generations, "forever, even forever and ever," and then you reach the object contemplated. Infinite as this figure is in its far-sweeping circle, that which it represents will equal it. It will not be necessary to take the figure at a discount. There will be no allowance to make on the score of Oriental imagery. If there should be failure anywhere, it will be in the figures employed, and not in that which it represents. Then the promise will be accomplished in its most literal acceptation. Not "one jot or tittle" of it will fall to the ground; but really and truly, "as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore," even so will the seed of Abraham be multiplied. Thus we see that this passage cannot be fairly and satisfactorily interpreted, without admitting the idea of the perpetuity of the earth, and of the race that peoples it in the way now contended for.

The next passage to which I would refer, as sustaining the view of which we are here speaking, is Isaiah 9:7. Here the prophet is announcing the birth of that Wonderful Child, who as "the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," was to "sit upon the throne of David, and to establish it forever;" and he affirms, concerning Him, that "of *the increase of His government* and peace, *there shall be no end.*" This is a very remarkable prediction. And what does it mean? In order to answer this question satisfactorily, it is only necessary to ascertain what constitutes "the increase of a kingdom?" It is not the enlargement of territory, and not the accumulation of wealth, but *the addition made to the subjects of the kingdom.* Now who will be the subjects of the kingdom promised to Christ in the passage we are considering? Not "the election of grace," "the church of the first-born," "the children of the resurrection," whom God is now gathering to Himself from among all the nations of the earth. These, *all* these, are to share the honor and glory of the kingdom with their triumphant Redeemer. They are "the people of the saints of the Most High," of whom Daniel speaks, chapter 7:27; and to whom he tells us that "the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given." They are to be "kings and priests unto God and the Lamb," and to reign with Christ, administering with Him, the affairs of His kingdom. And if this is so, then we must look elsewhere for the subjects of this kingdom. For it is hardly necessary to say, that the same persons cannot combine in themselves these two characters, or occupy these two positions. Those who are kings, reigning with Christ, cannot be the subjects of His kingdom. And if all the elect, chosen out of the successive generations of our race, down to the time of Christ's second coming are to reign with Him, the question is, over whom are they to reign? Who will be the *subjects* of that kingdom? If we suppose our race cut off and terminated, when "God shall have taken out the people" whom He is now gathering to Himself, you must have Christ and His resurrection saints administering a kingdom without any subjects, or you must *import* the subjects of it from some other world. But admit the idea that after God's grand educational process, now in progress, and which will be continued through the millennial period shall be completed, the stock of our race, then inhabiting the earth,

Digitized by Google

and still in the flesh, shall have the taint of original sin purged out, so that according to the promise, "the people shall be *all righteous;* they shall inhabit the earth forever," and the difficulty is removed. We see at once where the subjects of the kingdom promised to Christ and His resurrection people are to come from. If our race is to be continued on the earth, according to the language of Scripture for "*perpetual generations,*" then we see at once the source from which the promised *increase* of Christ's kingdom—an *increase* which is to have "*no end,*" will come. It is difficult to see how this passage can be fairly and satisfactorily explained according to any suggestion of views which cuts off the continuance of the race. But admit the idea of its everlasting continuance, and then there is no difficulty in seeing how the kingdom promised to Christ may be, in the most strict and literal sense, a kingdom, "*of the increase* of whose government there shall be *no end,* from henceforth, even forever."

R. N.

(To be continued.)

IDEAS OF THE FUTURE.

THE FAITH OF THE ANCIENT GERMANS.

It was a beautiful and quiet July evening, at the splendid German watering-place of Baden-Baden, when I seated myself in the reading-room of the Victoria Hotel, and took up a little German book, entitled "Aurelia," dedicated to "His Royal Highness, Leopold von Baden," which professes to furnish the Pictures and Dreams of the ancient inhabitants of Baden and its vicinity. At the end, I found a brief account of the old German mythology, and anticipations with reference to the ultimate future of this world. Having read with particular interest what related to the latter point, I took the book with me to my room, and translated a few sentences for the readers of the Prophetic Times. They are as follows:

"Fearful signs are appointed to precede the great day. Six unexampled winters shall succeed each other; the snows shall fall, and the sun shall be darkened. Along with this, peace and righteousness shall vanish from among men, and death shall hold his harvest-time upon the fields of battle. Spirits shall come forth from the realm of the lightning, and unite themselves with all the enemies of God, for the purpose of fearful strifes, which shall bring low all those who contend with each other, both the gods and the enemies of God. And when these gods are exterminated from their present dwelling-place, the sun shall be extinguished, and the stars shall disappear, and the earth shall be overflowed by the sea. The world shall be set on fire. Then shall Allfadur come from on high, and enter into strict judgment with mortals. The good among them shall be brought to Girula, a happy and glorious city in the South, where everything overflows with blessedness; but the wicked shall be made to wander in the under-world.

"But when the old earth and heavens have been destroyed by fire, there shall appear a new earth and heavens, which Allfadur shall himself rule and govern forever. A new sun and a new moon, like those that were before, shall appear in the heavens, and walk the same path of their predecessors. Another race of men shall spread itself over the earth; fields and trees shall produce of their own accord, and peace shall reign forever; whilst in the under-world shall be the concentration of eternal night."

I do not give this as something to be believed. There are elements in it which accord not entirely with the Scriptures. But it agrees with the "sure word of prophecy," more than it varies from it. If it is of purely heathen origin, it shows, with other like ideas which floated in heathen minds in different nations, what were the general outlines of the primitive belief and revelation on the subject; and if it has come from a Jewish or Christian source, it is another testimony to the manner in which the holy predictions of the Prophets and Apostles were anciently understood. It is clear, that the plain utterances of the Saviour himself, bear out the leading particulars. Read, fallen angels for "gods," and Christ the Lord for "Allfadur," and Jerusalem for "Girula," and there remains not much else to be materially changed.

J. A. S.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

JESUS THE TRUE SOVEREIGN.

BY WILLIAM LEASK, D.D.

FOUR great empires have successively risen upon the earth—the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman—in strict accordance with ancient prophecy. The last of them is now drawing to its end in its divided state of kingdoms. But a fifth is predicted, which is to be in extent and duration far greater than either of the preceding four, and in its laws and characteristics essentially different from, and infinitely superior to, them all. It is to be ruled over by One in our nature, but possessing none of our infirmities, and liable to none of our mistakes. In the days of His dominion the righteous are to flourish; war, cruelty, and oppression are to be unknown; and peace, brotherhood, liberty, justice, and joy, are to prosper in the earth. Wisdom and knowledge are to be the stability of His times. Intellect will then rise to a height she never reached before, without being bewildered by profitless speculations, or blinded by an irrational and godless infidelity: and men will be at last possessors of a dignity and power, a nobility and virtue, a godliness and truth, such as they never had before in the history of the world.

And all this will be in consequence of the character and supremacy of Him that shall rise to rule over them. Bad government has been the complaint of nations time out of mind. Bad government is the complaint of nations still. The complaint is founded in bitter experience and unquestionable truth. "The rights of the people," has been the rallying cry of many a sanguinary revolution; and when the revolution was effected, the people soon found themselves as far from their rights as before. And so will it be, O ye peoples and nations of the earth, until the Universal King shall take to himself His great power and reign. Ye comprehend not what your real rights are; and if ye did, ye are not yet in a state to use them; or rather if ye did, ye would turn your eyes to heaven, and look, and perhaps pray, for the return of the true Sovereign. The throne of iniquity which frameth mischief by a law can have no fellowship with Him. The purpose, therefore, has been announced: "I will shake the heaven and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother." (Hag. 2: 21, 22.) "I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until He come whose right it is; and I will give it Him." (Ezek. 21: 27.) "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh," writes the Apostle. "For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb. 12: 25–29.) The King of this strong, immovable, and permanent kingdom, which is to succeed the kingdoms that have all been subject to revolutions, is Jesus Christ the Lord.

Concerning His qualifications for this pre-eminent authority, we have more than faith to instruct us—we have undoubted fact; and fact, too, of the most complete and satisfactory kind.

Take first His present position. We see not yet all things put under man, as David had affirmed, writes Paul: but we see Jesus, "who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and

Digitized by Google

honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man;" or to arrange these thoughts according to our mode of speaking. We see Jesus, who was made a little while lower than the angels, on account of the suffering of death, and having by the grace of God tasted death for every man, crowned with glory and honor. This reading accords both with the fact and with other Scriptures. Jesus is now superior to the angels, so that He was only a little while lower than they. He was not crowned with glory and honor as man until He had tasted death for every man. And the glory and honor with which He is crowned was on account of, or as a reward for, His voluntary sufferings unto the death. Hence we read, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philip. 2:5–11.) Again: "He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:20–23.)

Thus, then, we see not yet all things put under man, but we see all things virtually put under Jesus, the Son of Man, man's representative, man's Lord. The 8th Psalm is therefore not narrative, but prophecy; and it will be literally fulfilled when all things shall be actually put under Christ, and when the song shall be sung, "O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!" The Apostle sees, in the present position of Jesus Christ, the pledge of His universal dominion, and of the fulfilment of the Father's design to give man pre-eminence, in the person of his Lord, over all mundane things. We have lost our supremacy, and have to fight every inch of our way. We have to toil with the earth before it will yield us bread and water. We have to struggle for our lives against countless diseases; we wrestle every hour against death itself, and at last it conquers. Our general supremacy over the world, the beast of the field, the bird of the air, and the fish of the sea, is maintained only at great hazards and by great exertion. We require all the aid of skill, understanding, energy, art, science, and gold, to maintain our precarious and constantly disputed power; and even if we had everything else in perfect subordination, we cannot cast out Satan, we cannot put an end to death. But we lift our eyes to the heavens, and by faith see One who took part of flesh and blood—laid hold of our nature—that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death that is, the Devil. So completely has He done this, and so certain, consequently, is the resurrection of all men, that Paul expressly says, "Our Saviour Jesus Christ hath abolished death." (2 Tim. 1:10.) The resurrection will be the triumphant proof that death is abolished, and the power of Satan forever destroyed. And the position of Jesus in heaven, who was dead and is alive again, and alive in our nature, is so positive an evidence of this, that we may triumphantly cry by anticipation, "It is done!"

Secondly, Jesus is qualified to be the universal King, because He is immortal. If any mortal man were to grasp the sceptre of the whole earth—if it were really possible that such should be the case—how long would his sovereignty continue? At any hour it might terminate by the stroke of death, without any guarantee that his successor should be able to hold the reins of such a government for a single day. But a King whom death cannot assail, and who has all in subjection under Him, has a qualification for such a glorious

Digitized by Google

throne that no one else can have. The Jews saw the force of this, and understood it, and correctly too, to be one of the grand characteristics of the Messiah. Hence, when Jesus spoke of being lifted up from the earth, they instantly caught the words as if He had thereby given up His claim to Messiahship. "We have heard out of the law," said they, "that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is the Son of man?" Like many other persons, both in ancient and modern times, they believed part of the truth, but not the whole. They believed that the Messiah should be the universal and immortal King, but they explained away those passages which predicted His humiliation, sufferings, and death. They were "slow of heart to believe *all* that the prophets had spoken." They exulted in the thought of the power and glory of the immortal Prince, but could not bear the picture of the atoning Lamb led to the slaughter; just as the majority of modern Christians rejoice in Christ crucified, but turn away with a look of incredulity when told that the Lord Jesus shall be literally King over the world which has been redeemed by His death, and of which He is unquestionably the owner as the Son of Man. But the Jews were right in what they believed. "They had been so taught by those who interpreted the law to them," says a popular commentator; that is to say, he suggests that the law had been misinterpreted. No such thing. The interpretation was correct, for it was literal, as the predictions referred to required. Such passages as the following occur in the Old Testament, and to them, doubtless, the people referred when they said: "We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever." "Once have I sworn by My holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me. It shall be established forever as the moon, and as a faithful witness in heaven." (Psalm 89:35–37.) "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth. His name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." (Psalm 72:7, 17.) "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek." (Psalm 110:4.) "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." (Isaiah 9:6, 7.) "And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even forever." (Micah 4:7.)

Such passages as these formed the authority of the Jews for maintaining the deathless continuance of the Son of David, the promised Messiah; and so far from misunderstanding them, they apprehended their proper import; and the Jews of this day receive them as did their fathers, and are looking for the coming of Christ the King, with an earnestness well fitted to put Christians to the blush.

Thirdly, the perfect righteousness of His character qualifies Jesus for universal sovereignty. Terrible have been the sufferings of nations from the injustice, cruelty, and tyranny of kings. Irresponsible despots, having the lives and property of their subjects at their disposal, have caused such agony, that the hand of the regicide has been deemed the hand of a saviour. The death of the oppressor, either natural or by violence, has often been the only hope of the down-trodden people, and even that was a source of hope only in cases where it held out the prospect of a change of dynasty or revolution.

For the sake of illustration, suppose some royal tyrant the crowned monarch of the whole world, and that from the rising to the setting of the sun all peoples were entirely subject, in soul, body, and property, to his imperial will. Why, the very thought makes one's flesh creep; and makes one thank God that for the present,

Digitized by Google

at least, the earth is divided into many empires, kingdoms, and republics. Some of them, thanks be to God, can consequently breathe unbidden, and think aloud, and call their persons and property their own. God had great mercy in store for mankind when He confounded their language at Babel, and consequently scattered them abroad on the face of the earth, so as to make a universal empire under any imperfect man totally impossible. But all this was provisional. He has greater mercy still in store for men, when He will destroy all local oppression, by uniting all nations under the one sceptre of the perfectly righteous, just, merciful, and benign Jesus. His ever-blessed name is the sure pledge that His reign will literally justify those glowing encomiums which the seers of Israel and Judah pass upon it. He will not oppress the poor, nor wrest righteousness in the judgment seat. His executive will never do violence to the interests of truth and equity. Men will not cry for more liberty when He shall be King over all the earth. No such word as slavery will be known during that long and glorious era. No widow will continue to urge an unjust judge to avenge her of her adversary. Revolution will not be needed; for there will be no desire to change either the Ruler or the mode of government for another. Hear one testimony to prove this truth: "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." (Isaiah 11: 1–9.)

What a sublimely beautiful anticipation is this! and how earnestly should we long for the time when the scenes predicted shall be realized in fact beneath these smiling heavens! The day will come, though skeptics sneer, and worldlings laugh, and Christians doubt. The day will come, for the prophets of God saw it in vision, and have pictured its leading features on the enduring page. The day will come, for the world needs such a sovereign Ruler as Jesus; and the Father hath appointed Him to judge the world in righteousness, because He is the Son of man. The day will come, for the righteous Lord is only waiting for the times which the Father hath put in His own power. The day will come: the souls of the martyrs are expecting it; the dead in Christ are waiting for it; the children of God are looking for it; the seed of Abraham are anticipating it; all creation is groaning for it; the powers of evil dread it; and the adversary is filled with wrath, because he knows it will shortly burst upon the world, and end his power forever!

Finally, we have evidence in what He has already done, that our Lord is qualified to fill the throne of all the earth. He is no untried Prince. Multitudes, both in heaven and on earth, have known Him long, and love Him much, and trust Him entirely. Many have laid down their lives for His sake, and many now living are ready to do the same thing at a moment's call. But this they would not do if there were the shadow of a doubt left respecting who and what He is. His history is before the world, and men have read it through revolving centuries; and generation after generation has taken it up, and admired the marvellous narrative. Congregations of people in many lands, and in every generation for the last eighteen

Digitized by Google

hundred years, have associated together, and adopted the name of "CHRIST," and voluntarily pledged themselves to His cause, whether it should lead them through good or through evil report, and have chosen of their brethren to teach and to preach His doctrine, and publicly to worship Him as their common Saviour and Prince. The maintenance of His authority and ordinances, the diffusion of His truth, and the circulation of His history, whatever the cost, the risk, or the danger, have been their objects. They were satisfied that all this was a duty, and they felt it both a pleasure and an honor. He had done so much for them, that they could not do less for Him. He had done so much for the world at large, that they wished all its inhabitants to hear the joyful news. He had, for the first time in the history of mankind, perfectly kept God's holy law—magnified it in the sight of heaven and earth—redeemed men from its curse—brought in everlasting righteousness—set His heel upon the head of the serpent that deceived and overthrew the parents of the race—exhibited eternal truth in all its native brilliance and healing power—voluntarily suffered unexampled sorrows, and submitted to a vicarious death—and proved His right to bear the majestic name of the Resurrection and the Life, by conquering death in its dark dominions, and rising from the dead on the morning of the third day. That He has done all this, and much more than all this, millions of living men are as certain as they are of their own existence.

Who, then, so worthy as He to possess the kingdom and the greatness of the dominion under the whole heaven? God and Man, Prince of the kings of the earth, Fulfiller of law, Saviour of the lost, Friend of the needy, Righteous Judge, Conqueror of Satan, Destroyer of death, Son of Man, True Adam, Heir of the world, take to Thee thy great power, and reign; and with one voice we shall cry, Amen, and Amen!

"Come, then, O King! o'er all thy works rejoice!
Come, then, and finish thy sublime designs!
Come then and banish from the waiting earth
The vestiges of ruin! Take thy power,
And wield it over man! Assert thy right
To everlasting royalty; and make this globe
The fairest star throughout the universe!
And when Thou comest, Lord! remember me!"

THE COMING TROUBLES.

A FEW WORDS OF SOLEMN WARNING.

AN almost universal opinion prevails that extraordinary events, greater than any we have ever yet seen, are at hand. (Matt. 24:14; Isa. 2:10–19; Hag. 2:6, 7.)

Believers! The signs of COMING REDEMPTION gather thick around us. (Matt. 24:14–33; Dan. 12:4; Mal. 3:1; Luke 21:25, 26, 28.)

Salvation is offered to all (Isa. 55:1; Matt. 11:28), and "*whosoever will*, let him take of the water of life *freely*" (Rev. 22:17; John 6:37); but it is promised only to Believers, through faith in Jesus Christ. (John 3:16.) "*Behold, now* is the 'accepted time;' *Behold, now* is the 'day of salvation.'" (2 Cor. 6:2.)

The GREAT TRIBULATION, a time of unexampled intense trouble (of which that in Matt. 24:21; Mark 13:19, 20, primarily fulfilled at the siege of Jerusalem, about A.D. 70, was but a type) *may* (*will*, it is believed) soon commence. Our gracious Lord *commanded* us (Luke 21:35, 36) to "watch and pray, that we may be accounted 'worthy to escape'" it. His people, therefore, may hope to be spared, either from that tribulation altogether, or from its full severity, or to be taken out of it, or to be assuredly kept safe even in passing through it; and they may humbly supplicate to have part in the FIRST RESURRECTION (Rev. 20:6; Phil. 3:11), when all the dead in Christ shall be raised with spiritual bodies, and His living people, who, through grace, are expecting (Heb. 9:28), loving (2 Tim. 4:8), patiently waiting (Rev. 3:10; James 5:8; 2 Thess. 3:5; Zeph. 2:3), and praying for (Phil. 4:5, 6; 1 Thess. 5:17, 20, 23), *His second coming*, shall be taken up, clothed in a moment (1 Cor. 15:51, 52) with spiritual bodies; and all these will together meet the LORD *in the air*, and thenceforward, wherever He is, be forever *with* HIM. (1 Thess. 4:17; Rev. 21:2, 3.) This taking up of the living *may* be on the

Digitized by Google

very day you read this; *will, probably,* be soon; and *will, certainly, be sudden,* and by most people, quite unlooked for.

For the comfort (and for the sake) of those of God's people who shall not have been so taken up, it is revealed (Matt. 24:22) that this time of intense trouble shall be shortened; and, as it was declared by Him (Isa. 26:9) that "when His judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," out of *the* great tribulation an innumerable multitude (Rev. 7:9, 14),* having been purified, and made white and tried (Dan. 12:10), shall be added to the saved, and evermore dwell with Christ.

In the midst, or at the ending of the tribulation, THE LORD, with His mighty angels (2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 19:14), and with all His saints (1 Thess. 3:13; Jude 14; Zech. 14:5), will descend *to the earth,* to save His people, the Jews, previously restored (chiefly in unbelief) to their own land, and their allies, and also to destroy His enemies at "the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16:14; 19:11–21; Ezek. 38; 39; Dan. 11:40–45; Joel 3:9–16: Zech. 14:4, 5; Isa. 18; 66:15, 16; Jude 15.) Then Popery and Mahometanism and the foretold "Man of Sin" (2 Thess. 2:3–8), having been destroyed with the brightness of His coming, Satan will be bound for 1000 years; and, the purified earth being inhabited by the Jews, and portions of other nations spared at the end of the tribulation, *the* MILLENNIUM *will commence, during which vast numbers shall be converted and saved.* (Is. 2:2–5; 11:1–10; 24:23; 25:1–9; 59:19–21; 60:21, 22; 61:10, 11; Matt. 13:43.)

At the end of the 1000 years, Satan having been loosed, a portion of mankind will be again deluded into open rebellion against God, who will then finally destroy Satan and all His enemies, and *Then cometh the end.* The rest of the dead will be raised, the last judgment take place (Rev. 20:5, 8–12), and the eternal state of all mankind, of perfect bliss, or (oh! awful alternative) of unutterable woe, will be unchangeably declared.

Still, we are spared, and we live in a day of privileges beyond any past age. How great consequently are our responsibilities! Let us attend to *present duties.* (Matt. 24:42, 46.) Are *we,* indeed, true believers? Then let us look for the more abundant fulfilment of God's gracious promise of a large outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28–32; Hos. 14), to prepare us better against the great tribulation, and for the coming of Christ. Let us be really in earnest in sending forth (with prayer) the Bible and faithful ministers, at home and abroad to Jews and Gentiles, and be more diligent in working for Christ, for "*the night cometh.*" Let us no longer *love the world;* but, striving to be increasingly watchful, prayerful, humble, loving, peaceful and joyful,—seek, in the dependence on the power and grace of the Holy Ghost, to live above the trifles of the day; to exhibit a calm and holy sobriety, remembering "THE LORD IS AT HAND." From a sense of *realized pardon,* let us labor more diligently for Him who has loved us and redeemed us, with the ransom of His own most precious blood; cultivate more close communion with JESUS, and more continually abiding fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit: and, because "the Gospel is to be preached in all the world as a *witness* to all nations, and then shall the end" (of this age or dispensation) come (Matt. 24:14), let us, as we, through grace, *long* for His appearing (2 Tim. 4:8), and seek to be made humble instruments in removing every obstacle to the fulfilment of "that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. 2:13, 14.) Surely He comes quickly. Amen. (Rev. 22:20.) "AS A SNARE SHALL THAT DAY COME ON ALL THEM THAT DWELL ON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH."

"WATCH, THEREFORE, AND PRAY ALWAYS, THAT YOU MAY BE ACCOUNTED WORTHY TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS THAT SHALL COME TO PASS, AND TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN." (Luke 21:35, 36; 1 John 3:3.)

* This great multitude are declared to be taken, not merely "out of great tribulation," as in our authorized version, but "out of THE *tribulation, the great one.*"—*Gr.*

Digitized by Google

THE MORNING DAWNS.

BY S. BATCHELOR.

Dawn of morning! is it near?
Night so long, the way is drear;
Do the signs of day appear?
Yes, morning dawns.

Time declares Earth's years grow old,
That the last is nearly told;
Signals mark night's hours enrolled;
The morning dawns.

Lo, the "worse and worse of sin,"
Speaks the truth in battle din;
Darkest hour when day begins,
And morning dawns.

Justice will not always wait;
Truth is knocking at the gate;
Judgment day! Sinner, too late;
But morning dawns.

Voyagers make their reckoning tell,
Skilful pilots show it well,
Time foretold to thoughts impel,
Of morning dawn.

Sounds come from the watchman's tower,
Heralding the coming hour;
Gospel herald, speak with power,
Of morning dawn.

War-clouds gather,—nations rage,—
But the last they soon shall wage,
Filling up the sacred page;
The morning dawns.

Come, Lord Jesus, quickly come,
Gather thine elect ones home,
Never more in sin to roam.
Bright morning dawns.

A JOYFUL DISCOVERY.

A poor old woman, who has read her Bible and loved it for forty years, came the other day, looking for some help to bring her to see her only child—a married man—before she should die. We gave her some assistance and instruction. She then asked us if we *knew* that the Lord Jesus Christ was to come to this earth again?

We said, "To be sure; that is the joy of His waiting Church."

"Did you ever hear," she said, "that if we are alive when He comes, we'll be lifted up without dying, to meet him in the air?"

We said "Yes."

"Well, dear, that's the joyfullest thing I ever heard—the pleasantest news I ever read, except salvation's joyful sound," said the old creature. "Long as I'm reading the Word of God, I never read that sweet news before; and sure *the world does not know it.*"

We said, "No, nor does the world care about it."

"Well, dear, I just want to see if my son and grandchildren is livin', and be ready to meet the Lord when He comes again, for He may come any minute; and oh! it would be a great mistake to have the notice of His coming before our eyes all our lives, and yet be taken unawares."

Reader, do you believe that Christ is coming. And if you believe it, *are you ready to meet Him.*

Editorial.

THE PRESENT ASPECT OF EUROPE

AND PROBABLE INDICATIONS OF THE NEAR FUTURE.

With this number of the Prophetic Times we commence our third year. By the help of the Lord we continue to this day. His providence opens for us a wider field, and we feel impelled to increase our zeal and efforts in sounding the cry, "Behold the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him." It is not for

Digitized by Google

us to forecast the events that shall immediately herald His appearing. Our duty is to stand on our tower and "watch, for we know not the day or the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching; and if He shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch and find them so, blessed are those servants."

Another year has commenced, and we are so much nearer the long looked for and eventful day of the Lord's coming. His providence is fulfilling prophecy. It is our duty and privilege to note the signs of the times as He unfolds them. The last year, which opened with wars and rumors of wars in Europe, has passed away without the convulsions and agitation that seemed to be so near at hand. The clouds that lowered there have been lighted up, and the muttering thunders stayed. In the lull of the tempest, the hearts of many begin to persuade them that the storm has passed. A time of peace and prosperity, instead of war and tribulation, is looked for, and planned, by the kings and rulers of the earth, that take counsel against and not of the Lord. France continues to prosecute her ambitious designs. Although defeated in the project of a Congress of Sovereigns for the preservation of peace, Napoleon has managed to keep Europe, in the main, protected from the scourge of civil war. The affairs of Germany have assumed a new aspect. The bonds of friendship, if not alliance, between the despotic sovereigns, seem to be closer and firmer drawn. The Russian Autocrat, with his Imperial consort, has visited France, and received caresses. The Schleswig Holstein and Danish questions and quarrel have received an unexpected solution. Plans are said to be entertained for a new division and balancing of the German powers, by the annexation of Northern Germany to Prussia, and Southern to Austria, their sovereigns to assume the titles of the Emperor of the North and the Emperor of the South, and to have a joint ministry, and a common capital in Frankfort with a single Parliament for all the German States, and a condition stipulated in case of male issue of the one Imperial house becoming extinct, for the consolidation and unification of the whole in the other. The consent of France, it is rumored, has been given to this arrangement, having been secured by the promise to her of the cession of all the land west of the Rhine, while Italy is to receive Venetia, and Russia the Polish districts of Austria and Prussia.

Italian affairs are reported to have been adjusted by negotiations between the French Emperor and Victor Emanuel, so secretly carried on as to be spoken of, by Papal advocates, rather as a "conspiracy" than a concordat. The perplexing question with France has been, how to evacuate Rome without sacrificing the Pope, so palpably and offensively, as to rouse the sacerdotal party at home. The abuses of the Papal Government in Rome, have remained, notwithstanding all remonstrances. The Emperor has become weary of the *non possumus* of his Holiness, and will leave him to the protection of the Italian king, of which procedure, the priests say, that "the wolf has promised to take the best care of the sheep." Left to his own feeble resources and the protection of his heterogeneous forces, the evacuation of Rome by the French troops will prove to the Pope the most formidable evil. It is no pleasant prospect for him to be left alone with his dear Italian children. The arrangement has led to prognostications of the complete downfall of the temporal power of the Pope. Russia objects not to the plan. Nor does Garibaldi; nor will Spain or Austria, it is said, attempt to interfere with it. The result may be, that in two years time the usurping bishop, with his triple crown, claiming to be King of kings and Lord of lords, will have lost his temporal dominion, and become but an ecclesiastical or spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church. The "National Committee" of Rome proclaims, "We shall respect the Bishop of Rome, while we get rid of the most ferocious of governments" by such an arrangement. "We shall thus preserve the Church to the Papacy, restore Rome to the Romans, and accomplish the regeneration of Italy." It is worthy of notice, as a remarkable coincidence, that by such a solution of the vexed Roman question, the Papal

Digitized by Google

power, in the year 1866, will be shorn of its temporal authority, which may, in part at least, signally characterize the completion of the 1260 years, counting from A. D. 606, when, by the decree of the Emperor Phocas, Pope Boniface III was constituted Ecumenical Bishop, who thereupon undertook to exercise an authority never known before or claimed by any within the Roman Empire. (See Bowers's History of the Popes, vol. i, page 426.)

Expectation has long been directed by many to the year 1866, as destined to be an eventful year. Others have thought that doubts and difficulties of a chronological character prevent an accurate estimate, and allow a range of four years from 1864 to 1868, for the eventful period now confessedly near at hand. But what shall be the signal event, all are by no means agreed. Some have thought it might be the coming of the Lord; others the return of the Jews to their own land; others the repetition of revolutionary scenes in Europe like those of 1848; and others still some new and more blasphemous phase of Popery, destined through the despotic ascendency of France, to develop the infidel king. It is not for short-sighted mortals, whatever may be their sagacity, to interpret positively in circumstantial history, predictions yet unfulfilled; especially where the prophet has not related the circumstances in detail, but left gaps, as it were, between strongly marked epochs and events, the filling up of which in Providence must remain until they occur, mere matters of conjecture, or at least of inference, suggested or aided by the careful adjustment and harmonizing of the different converging lines of prophecy. When Pio Nono fled from Rome to Gaeta, and while the guest of the King of Naples, many confidently believed he never would revisit the Vatican, but would be the last of the Popes. But Providence falsified such conjectures. Yet the means of his protection, viz., the support of Napoleon and the French troops, have actually, though gradually, prepared the way for depriving the Pope of his temporal power. Present indications of Florence becoming the political and military capital of the Italian States, confederated under the government of Victor Emanuel, and of Rome's becoming but the seat and centre of idolatrous ceremonies and influence, cannot fail to attract the attention of all observant of the hand of Providence. Twelve years ago when in Rome, and eight months subsequently when in Constantinople, just prior to the Crimean war, we expressed the conviction, that not until the death of Pio Nono,—the religious puppet then and since managed or manœuvred and kept in place and power by rival and jealous Antichristian sovereigns—should we look for any great signal and strongly marked events, that would change the relations of Papal countries in Europe, break up the old state of things, and destroy the balance of power, so long and carefully watched and guarded by despotic sovereigns? The popular conviction also began to be current that the present would be the last of the Popes, whatever might be the events that should arise. His life has been protracted beyond expectation; and though often reported to be near his end, he still continues. More than ever, within the last three centuries, are the cardinals, ecclesiastics, and devotees of the Papal power, devoted to its interests, and determined to insist upon the supremacy of Rome. Pio Nono and his court, have staked all their hopes on the zeal and fervor of their revived and intensely stimulated idolatry of "the immaculate Virgin," displayed in the solemn announcement of her immaculate conception, equally miraculous with that of the blessed Redeemer; and in the prayers, processions, offerings and adorations by which they seek to honor her. Mariolatry has culminated, and is now in the very zenith of its ardor. Ere long it is destined to receive the stunning blow of God's avenging hand. It may come in a way not at all looked for. Whether France and Austria shall be involved in contests for the creation and control of a succeeding Pope, or the maddened and misgoverned people of "the eternal city," shall become more than ever exasperated, we would not venture to predict or even surmise. But we should not be surprised, if ere long Rome itself should perish, and the cry of "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," should be heard throughout the earth. The Ottoman and Papal powers, the two great apostasies of Islamism and Roman-

Digitized by Google

ism, Infidelity and Idolatry, are both manifestly nearing an eventful crisis. What if the literal destruction of the city of Rome, in whatever way accomplished, should lead, to the partition of Southern Europe and the Orient among the despotic powers; the establishment of Jerusalem as the religious centre of the Greek and Latin Churches; the resettlement of Palestine, the influx of Jewish wealth and population; and to the Satanic elements, of infidel and atheistic rationalism, idolatrous superstition, and blasphemous denial of the Son of God, being combined and harmonized in "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit," to make war against "the witnesses of Christ, and overcome and kill them" in the last terrible persecution, when "their dead bodies shall lie in the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified?" We venture not confidently so to affirm, for we wait for Providence to be the expounder of prophecy, and not any theory. Yet it is worthy of note, that France still keeps her eye on Syria, and Russia on Palestine. The former is constructing a military road over Lebanon, like that of Mount Cenis, and has already attempted to spirit the Pope from Rome and establish him at Jerusalem, the detection of which plan, it is said, proved the occasion, some years ago, of the Pope's uneasiness, and demand upon the French Emperor for the removal of the French troops from the city of Rome. English capitalists are attempting to construct a railroad from the foot of Mount Cassius to the Euphrates, and be ready for emergencies.

What to do with the Pope is the great question of the day and of the hour. It has perplexed the Emperor of France, perhaps more than any other. It can not long remain *sub silentio*. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in due season, will solve it by His providence. We need have no painful solicitudes or alarm for the future. It may be that He has the honors of martyrdom to award to yet others of his faithful witnesses. What have we to fear who wait for His coming? The kingdoms of the world—however "the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and his Anointed, saying, 'Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us,'—are to be broken with a rod of iron, and dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel, ere this demand upon the Father is made for the heathen to be given for His inheritance, and "the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession."

Happy will it be for our own beloved land, if as a nation we be not involved in the guilt, and entangled in the condemnation, of the Antichristian nations of Europe. Whatever is our guilt—and our crimes are many and great—we have not yet, as a nation, apostatized from the profession of the Gospel, either into infidelity or idolatry. True, there has been a manifest growing defection in the land, but not universal and fatal, from the purity and simplicity of the Evangelical faith, by the denial of the Deity of Christ, of the necessity and reality of His atonement, and of regeneration by the Spirit, of man's utter inability to save himself by any doings, deservings, or sufferings of his own, and of the sole and all-sufficient way of justification by faith in the perfect righteousness of the Saviour of sinners. Theories and vain disputes, too, about the nature of inspiration, have, to an alarming extent, been undermining, in the minds of many, the absolute and infallible authority of the Sacred Scriptures as the word of God. "Oppositions of science, *falsely so called*," have entered the sanctuaries, and claimed to be the interpreters of the Divine oracles; and a natural religion, even worse than the Deism of Lord Herbert, because disguised under the teachings of Christianity, is supplanting the Evangelical faith; and, denying the Lord that bought us, scatters broadcast among us the seed of Heathenism. Unitarianism, an apostasy akin to Mohammedanism, or the Deism of the Turks, German Rationalism, another phase of Infidelity, Judaism a malignant blasphemy of the Lord Christ, and Popery or Romanism, a ferocious persecuting Idolatry, are all at work corrupting the public mind and conscience. How far they may extend, and with what power prevail, it behooves all Protestants

Digitized by Google

of the Evangelical faith, to inquire; and watching with prayer, and laboring diligently by manifestation of the truth to the consciences of their fellow-men, in a walk and conversation according to the Gospel and in the Spirit of Christ, endeavor to counteract and overcome. Denial and resistance of the supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, whether by those bearing authority, or among the masses of a people, are the prolific source of lawlessness and despotic will, subversive of the peace and order, the safety and well-being, of the social state. We have not, however, sinned beyond recovery. We greatly need the Spirit of God in copious effusion upon our land, to turn men away from their avarice, oppression, and increasing corruptions. The multiplication of Christ's faithful witnesses among us, who constitute a nation's safeguard, a general revival, reformation, and a revived and increased respect for law and the Divine ordinance of government, will secure for us the protection of the King of kings, and the blessings of peace and prosperity. May that blessed Spirit be poured out abundantly from on high! God be praised, that amid the terrible scenes of warfare, and bloodshed, and desolation, from which as a nation we have suffered so much during the last and previous years of the ferocious Rebellion which treason has organized, there are unmistakable proofs of the guardianship of His providence over us, leading to the hope and confidence that He will not break us to pieces as a potter's vessel, but purge us and preserve us a light in the earth, even amid the darkness predicted that shall cover Antichristian lands, before He shall come to execute His terrible judgments, and take the ends of the earth for his possession. The day of our nation's deliverance dawns upon us. Be it our duty and delight to hail the brightness of His rising. With the Constitution of our Federal Government amended so as to forever abolish everything like oppression, and also to rid that instrument of its atheistic feature in its present non-recognition of God, by introducing into it a declaration of His existence and providence over us, and doing honor to the name of Jesus, which is above every name—which last amendment to the preamble of the Constitution, we rejoice to see so earnestly and extensively urged by Christian people of different Evangelical denominations—we fondly hope that our beloved country shall be found in a right posture before Him, to secure escape for us from the devastating tempests already hurtling in the horizon of the Old World, and destined, ere long, to sweep with destructive fury the people that oppose His rights and the sovereignty of His throne.

Our readers, we trust, will bear a word from us in relation to our work, and be induced to increase their co-operative efforts.

We mail about nineteen hundred copies of the Prophetic Times monthly, including those which are sent abroad.

We are not self-sustaining. The recent advance in paper and printing has increased our printer's bills nearly 30 per cent. We have received quite a number of donations during the year; and should these continue, and should our subscription list increase as it has done during the past months, we will just about pay our way. Of course this only includes the printer's and binder's bills; those who labor in editing and managing the work receive nothing. We will still have to depend, therefore, on the friends of the cause for support by donations, until our subscription list shall be considerably increased. We are endeavoring to extend the circulation in Great Britain, and send 100 copies every month to a publishing house in London, acting as our agents. Everywhere our serial seems to be favorably received, except by scoffers. It is a necessity in this country. We have been surprised to find so much literature published in England upon this and related subjects, while in this country there is so little. G. D.

A TALK WITH OUR READERS ABOUT COMMON THINGS.

DEMONISM, alias SPIRITUALISM. No. 4.

2. The second grand mark of the latter-day seducing spirits is, that *they bring doctrines of demons.*

This is an unmistakable characteristic. Their

Digitized by Google

whole teaching rests on this, viz., *communications from the spirit-world.*

They say that hindrances have always existed to a free intercourse between men in the flesh and the world of spirits; and that only of late years (beginning at Rochester, in New York) *have means been found to remove them*, and the mind of men in a proper condition to receive the communications; and that now these communications must be made general, and by them universal blessings will be ushered in. The unseen world, they teach, consists exclusively of happy spirits, except such who still have an earthly element clinging to them; and are, as yet, temporarily, unenlightened and unrefined. These spirits, they say, overflow with philanthropy, *and now come forward to enlighten and help suffering humanity, in its "rudimentary" condition.* By following *these teachings*, the whole world will be restored to prosperity and happiness. They communicate through the so-called "spiritual circles," in the first instance; and when the votaries are more advanced, they become "writing" mediums, and finally receive direct inspirations, which they communicate by the voice. They desire that the intercourse with spirits should become universal, because it would show man his *true destiny*, and make everybody happy.

Their teaching is also the doctrine *concerning* demons; because they deny the existence of angels, either good or bad, saying that the souls of men are angels, and none others; and that it is the spirits of departed men who wish to communicate. Now we know that the word "daimon" (or demon), in Greek always signifies, not "devil," as our version usually gives it, but a ghost, or departed spirit of a *man.* And hence these teachings are, indeed, "doctrines of *demons.*"

They are such, also, because of their tendency to exalt *selfs;* in diametric opposition to the fundamental Divine law of love to God and man as supreme. And selfishness is the fundamental law of Diabolism. The glory of God the wandering demons of "spiritualism" hate, and seldom mention except to deride; but they are full of the praises of pretended natural and socialistic perfection.

And again, the teachings of "spiritualism" are doctrines of demons, because they are always intent upon prominently holding up to ridicule the idea of the existence of *evil spirits. No such, say they, are in existence.* Nothing but an effete superstition leads men still to think so. How then can "spiritualistic" communications, in any case, be bad, or mislead? The "spirits" are only anxious to *do good* to mankind. How wrong, therefore, in men to refuse to listen to their best friends!

And lastly, these seducing spirits are demons, because their doctrines not only deny Christianity, and uphold the vilest pantheism and socialism, but are brimful of HATRED AND BITTERNESS *against the Gospel of Christ.* Here they show their true nature: "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?"

They demand, as we have already said, that the *will* shall be surrendered implicitly to *their infallible* teachings. *They are preparing the way to make the world what it will be after Satan and his angels shall have been cast out of the aerial spaces into the earth, during the three and a half years of the Great Tribulation* viz., a *pandemonium. Now*, they communicate from the aerial regions, as they themselves say; but, *then* (which they are careful not to say), the bottomless pit will be opened (Revelation 9), and they will come out in the smoke, in the shape of supernatural locusts, under their king Apollyon, or Apoleon, the Destroyer, to the number of 200,000,000.

Let us listen awhile to their speech.

"The fear of a fabulous Devil is, even at this advanced period of civilization, much stronger in timid and 'undeveloped' minds, than the love of truth and Deity. And the consequence is, that whenever the inhabitants of the spirit-world strive to manifest themselves to the inhabitants of the natural world in which we live, . . . they are afraid to receive the spirits in their homes, lest they be not angels from heaven, but agents of the supposed King of Darkness, who has mythologically been invested with such terrific power and influence. But the time has now arrived, when the two worlds —the spiritual and the natural—are prepared

Digitized by Google

to meet and embrace each other on the middle ground of *mental freedom* and *progression*. And those who are most advanced in individual refinement, harmony, and spiritual truth" (*i. e.*, most thoroughly demonized), "will gladly receive and philosophically interpret every communication which may emanate from above." (Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse, page 46.)

"Such minds cannot possibly stop short of the accomplishment and establishment of an actual *commerce*" (the italics are his), "between the natural and the spiritual worlds, as between Europe and America; and in this, the higher sphere of sciences, love, power and intelligence, are making every effort to assist them." (Idem, page 59.)

"There are no absolutely evil or false spirits in any department of God's beautiful universe." (Idem, page 87.)

A special, grand communication, given in New England, and written in unknown electrical characters, is thus interpreted. "Our society desires, through various mediums, to impart thoughts." And another: "Let all nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled; let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified; or let them hear these things, and say it is truth." (Idem, page 60. A Parody of Bible Truth, and Coming Events. Isaiah 43 : 9.)

Again, these wandering spirits, speaking lies in hypocrisy, and glorifying corrupt human nature, exhort thus: "To the end that all may become recipients of heavenly messages, let all begin to form true characters, to adopt correct habits, and to live just and noble lives." (Idem, page 70.)

"I was assured," says Mr. Davis, "that the time was now" (1859) "past when these new things would have been ignorantly termed demonism, enchantment, or witchcraft." (Idem, page 79.)

And again (page 81), "Since this method of sensuous communication has become satisfactorily established, whereby spirits can address the *material* senses of their earthly friends, great numbers in this sphere are constantly, and with enthusiastic joy, imparting thoughts and affectionate sentiments to mankind." (Query: why did they never know this way before? They "know" and "know not." Or, rather, God restrained them up to this time, but now relaxes His hold a little, that the depravity of man may be seen to reach its culmination.)

On page 91 we read that "All evil is but imperfection tending to its ultimate perfection. The material senses, here, discover to us, and innumerable *facts* demonstrate, that the doctrine of evil spirits is fabulous; and to the rightly educated truly religious mind, it is blasphemous, and prejudicial to the progression of thought and intelligence."

Lecture 25 of No. VIII, The Great Harmonia, and No. III, The Seer, is "A brief exposition of the Satan which tempted Jesus of Nazareth." (Which one is it that illuminated the Harmonial Man?) On page 92 of the Philosophy of Spiritual Intercourse, we read: "*Perfect passiveness* is necessary that we may obtain truthful and reliable communications; and when these conditions are not fulfilled, a disappointed experience reminds us that we have violated and deranged the prescribed laws of these communions." On page 386 of the Autobiography, we find the statement that "spiritualism" is "the Gospel of Nature's Divine Revelations." On page 479, "spiritualists" are called "The Evangelists of the New Dispensation." On page 519: "We hail the promulgation of the Harmonial Philosophy as a New Era in the world; and by faith in cause and effect we prospectively see the day when, through its influence, the discordant powers and principalities of this world will become ONE KINGDOM OF LOVE, WISDOM, AND HARMONY." (Thus Satan promises a parody of the millennial kingdom which he knows now to be so near.)

Page 521: "The Harmonial Philosophy is the Gospel of Nature and Reason." On page 385 we read: "The interior wisdom of Jesus, formerly, and of *our living prophet now*" (A. J. D.), "prove that a spirit is in man." What blasphemy and unmeaning twaddle! No wonder that these false Christs cry out too (page 389), "Reform! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. FEBRUARY, 1865. No. 2.

Special Contributions.

THE DESTINY OF OUR EARTH AND RACE.

(Continued from page 3.)

In our last number we argued the perpetuity of our earth, and the race upon it, in successive generations, forever; because unless this be so, the promise made to Abraham of a posterity as numerous as the stars of heaven and the sand upon the sea-shore could never be realized, and also because the promise made to Christ, that there should be "no end to the *increase* of his kingdom," renders this absolutely necessary.

The next passage adduced in support of the view now contended for is Isaiah 66: 22: "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord, so shall your *seed* and your *name* remain." This is, perhaps, the strongest passage in the Bible, in its bearing on this subject. Its testimony is very clear and very conclusive. Here we have the new heavens and the new earth described as in existence. This carries us far out, beyond the time of Christ's second coming. The resurrection has taken place. The number of the elect is accomplished. The judgment is passed. The everlasting kingdom of the Son of Man is established in the earth. The crowns reserved in heaven, as the rewards of the ransomed, have been distributed to them. "The dispensation of the fulness of times" is come. Our earth has entered on its final stage of blessedness and glory. And as we take the passage before us as our point of view, and stand and gaze upon the earth in this period of its final development, we find existing in it a state of things in which the distinction between Jew and Gentile is kept up. Israel, as a nation, are occupying their own land, and are still retaining their own peculiar and distinctive name. "As the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain, saith the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain." This is a promise made to Israel as a nation. It cannot be wrested from them in any fair, honest handling of God's word. Now, if this promise is to be fulfilled in the renewed earth, it follows, as a matter of course, that our race must be existing then in a condition of being entirely different from that to which the redeemed of Christ, in their resurrection state, will attain unto. The Apostle teaches us most distinctly and emphatically that their condition of happiness in Christ is one in which all the earthly distinctions of sex, or name, or nation, are forever done away. "For in Christ Jesus"—this describes the unity into which believers of all ages are brought, in which they will abide forever—"there is neither Jew, nor Greek, neither male nor female, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but all are one." (Gal. 3: 28; Col. 3: 11.) This will be true of the whole election of grace, the Church of the first born, gathered out of all nations. Now go forward, with the condition which the Apostle here describes, to that period in the future which Isaiah has in view in the passage we are considering from his writings. When the new heavens and the new earth are made, and the resurrection saints are established in their everlasting portion, there will be nothing found in *their* condition answering to the prophetic language in the passage before

Digitized by Google

us. There will be representations there, indeed, from all nations, but no national distinction will remain among them. No trace of Israel's seed or Israel's name will be found there. In the new heavens, where "the children of the resurrection" will dwell, all such distinctions will be done away. But in the new earth, possessed and peopled by the stock of our race, made perfect, indeed, but not attaining to the resurrection, and still in the flesh, as Adam was in the innocence of his creation state, we find a condition of things in which the language of Isaiah may receive an exact and literal fulfilment. There, national distinctions will still remain. Successive generations of happy and rejoicing people will follow each other, and Israel's seed and Israel's name will continue while the new heavens and the new earth shall endure. Thus the promise will be accomplished in which God pledges his word that they shall be "an *eternal* excellency—a joy of *many generations*." (Isaiah 60:15.) This passage was just quoted to round off the sentence with, and yet it furnishes an argument strongly confirmatory of what has gone before; for this, too, is a promise to Israel; and this, too, belongs to the period of the new heavens and the new earth. It shows us that Israel, as a distinct people, will be in existence then, that that existence will be eternal, and that during the continuance of that existence there will be successive generations of inhabitants peopling the earth.

The next argument I would adduce in support of the view here taken is from those passages of Scripture which represent the redeemed of the present dispensation as "the first fruits" of our race. There are two passages of the New Testament to which I would here refer. One of these is James 1:18: "Of His own will begat He us, that we should be a kind of *first fruits of His creatures*." The other is Rev. 14:4: "These were redeemed from among men, being *the first fruits* unto God and the Lamb." There is a reference, in both these passages, to one of the Levitical ordinances of Moses. Before the harvest was gathered, the Israelites were required to take a sheaf of the grain, and present it for an offering before God. This sheaf was called "the first fruits of the harvest." It was considered as specially holy, being set apart peculiarly to the service of God; and after this sheaf had been properly presented, the harvest was gathered in. It is to this Mosaic institution that there is a reference in the passages above quoted. There all Christian people,—the entire Church of the first born,—the whole election of grace, under the present dispensation, are spoken of as "*the first fruits unto God and the Lamb*." And the application of this language, thus made, teaches us two important things. One of these has to do with the people of Christ, and the other with the race from which they are taken. Believers are represented by the sheaf, which constituted the first fruits. That sheaf was taken to the sanctuary, and there dedicated to God in a peculiar manner. Its character and destiny was entirely different from that of the rest of the grain in the field, which the reapers gathered in. And this is the case with the people Christ is now gathering to himself. They are "a chosen generation—a peculiar people." They are specially consecrated to God, and stand in such a relation to Him as no other creatures will occupy. "They are *the first fruits* of His creatures." And then the use of this language teaches us a most important truth respecting the race from which these first fruits are gathered. When the sheaf of the first fruits was presented, it was a pledge that *there would be a harvest*. That single sheaf was not all that the field was to yield. The grains gathered into that sheaf were but as "a drop in the bucket;" but as one grain of sand to all upon the ocean's shore; but as a unit to infinity, compared to the innumerable grains which the reapers would gather from the harvest-field. And if the whole Church of the first born, all the redeemed of God from Abel down to the resurrection, constitute only the one sheaf of the first fruits, then we must look elsewhere for the harvest, of which they are the promise and pledge. And where shall we look, if it be not to the race purified and perfected, and put in possession of the earth forever? If the continuance and propagation of the race be cut off at the time of the resurrection, then the figure we are now considering fails. We have the sheaf of the first fruits, indeed, but there is

Digitized by Google

no harvest to follow it. That sheaf is not a promise or pledge of anything.

And then there is another thought suggested by this subject. The condition and destiny of the sheaf of the first fruits were wholly different from the condition and destiny of the rest of the grain that made up the harvest. They sprang, indeed, from the same stock; they grew in the same soil, and ripened by the same influences. But the first fruits were taken to the sanctuary, and set apart to high and holy uses, while the grain of the harvest was gathered into barns, and reserved for ordinary and secular uses. And here we have distinctly pointed out the difference in character and destiny between "the children of the resurrection," who will constitute "the first fruits unto God and the Lamb" of the great work of redemption, and the harvest our race will yield in its restored and final state of glory. Of the former, our Saviour has told us that "they will neither marry, nor be given in marriage; neither will they die any more, for they will be as the angels of God in heaven." (Matt. 22: 30.) But of the latter, the portion of our race who shall possess and people the earth under the everlasting reign of Christ and his saints, their condition and destiny will be very different. They will not attain unto the resurrection. Death, indeed, will be unknown to them. But they will be partakers of flesh and blood, as Adam was in the innocence of his creation state. They will marry and be given in marriage. They will cultivate the earth, and navigate the sea, and carry on all those avocations and follow all those pursuits that would be necessary and consistent among nations of men dwelling together in holiness, in happiness, and peace. What a glorious harvest the earth will yield through the everlasting ages, when its rejoicing tenantry shall be established in such a condition of enduring blessedness! And when the triumphant Redeemer shall look upon the world, for which He died, restored to such a state of glory and of bliss, then, as He receives the homage of the joyous multitudes who shall people it in perpetual generations, how emphatically the promise will be fulfilled which declares that "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied!"

I had hoped to finish this subject in the present article, but one or two other passages still remain to be considered. R. N.

TWO STAGES OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE JUST.

In an able article, entitled "The Difficulty Solved," in the October number of "The Prophetic Times," the two stages of the Advent were amply proved. What we design to illustrate in the present article is the duality of the resurrection of the just.

As there are two translations of the righteous, there are also two resurrections of the righteous, separate from the resurrection of the wicked after the thousand years. In the first of these, the first translation and the first resurrection, it is distinctly stated that the saints are both caught up together. "The dead in Christ shall rise first. Then *we which are alive* and remain shall be *caught up* with them, to meet the Lord *in the air*." Here the Lord does not descend to earth to meet them, but they ascend to meet Him. But where do they ascend to? Not to heaven, for He "descends from heaven;" and they ascend to Him, "to meet Him in the air." (1st Thess. 4: 16–17.) He does not descend so low as earth, nor do they ascend as high as heaven, but midway, as it were, between heaven and earth. If there is a first resurrection together with the first translation, is there not also a second resurrection with the second translation?

Let us collate the Scripture in reference to it, and see if there is not also a duality here. First let us examine a little further into the two translations, and see, by the similarity of time and scenery, if we cannot also identify the second translation with the second resurrection of the righteous. There are two translations spoken of in the 24th chapter of Matthew. First, "the eagles are gathered"—this is the first translation, *then the* TRIBULATION, then the second translation, in which "the angels are sent to gather the elect." (Matt. 24: 28–31; Luke 17: 34–37.) We observe, in Matthew 24: 29, that the tribulation comes between these two translations.

Digitized by Google

There is no question about the connection of the first resurrection with the first translation, for it is definitely stated that "they shall be caught up together." Neither do we think there will be any difficulty in proving the unmistakable connection of the second. But first, it will be necessary to identify several other synchronical events. The time between the first and second Advents is generally supposed to be seven years. In the middle of these seven years the slaughter of the witnesses, in the 11th chapter of Revelations, occurs. But when do these slaughtered witnesses arise? It is said, "After three days and a half the spirit of life entered into them from God, and they stood upon their feet." What next? "They ascend up to heaven in a cloud." We see here that these resurrected witnesses are also caught up. The "three days and a half," are supposed to mean, according to the year-day system, three and a half years. But how do we synchronize this second resurrection of Rev. 11: 11, 12, with the second translation of Matt. 24: 30, 31? By the time, and the identity of events connected with it.

The second translation takes place immediately after, almost simultaneously with* the appearance of "the sign of the Son of man in heaven." The next event that occurs immediately after the second translation is the descent to earth: "For the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives." "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth." (Zech. 14: 4–5–9.) Now, here we have a positive point of identity in the mention of the kingdom; for immediately after the slaughtered witnesses ascended into heaven the kingdom is mentioned: "The kingdoms of this earth are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever." "Thou hast taken to thyself thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and *the time* of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants; . . . and shouldst *destroy them that destroy* the earth." (Antichrist, the great destroyer or desolator, and his armies.) (Rev. 11: 11, 12, 15, 17, [illegible]8.) See how immediately after this second resurrection the kingdom is mentioned, as it is immediately after Christ's descent upon the Mount of Olives. But just before this, and previous to His descent to the earth, the second translation also occurs. Are not these events synchronical? Here, then, we have the duality of the second translation and the second resurrection as unmistakably as the first; for though it is not exactly stated, as in the first, that they are "caught up together," yet they are just as unmistakably identified by synchronous events, and similarity of scenery, &c.

But the proofs adduced are but a small portion of the evidences,—among which we may mention the identity of the earthquake in Rev. 11: 13 and Zech. 14: 4, 5.

We have space to give but a few more; but it would astonish any one, who would examine the subjects, to find so many corroborative passages. For instance, a passage, not exactly in connection with the resurrection, but proving to a certainty, the personal presence of the Saviour when the seventh angel began to sound. In Rev. 10: 7, it is said, "When the seventh angel shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be ended." How can the mystery of God be ended, except by His appearing? And accordingly, in the first verse of Rev. 10, He does "descend from heaven, clothed with a cloud and a rainbow upon His head, and His face was as it were the sun, and His feet as it were pillars of fire, and He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth," . . . and seven thunders uttered their voices. To whom can such a description as this apply but to our Lord himself? Turn to the description of our Lord in Rev. 1: 15, 18, and see if He is not identified with the angel that *descended from heaven* in Rev. 10: 1, 7, by the *face as the sun that shineth*, and the feet of fire (Rev. 4: 3). In Rev. 1: 18, He proclaims himself as "He that liveth, and was dead, and is alive forevermore, having the keys of death and hell." He is also identified as the angel that came down from heaven to bind Satan, in Rev. 20: 1, 3, by the possession of the keys (Rev. 1: 18). But the point

* Mr. Baxter says, a few hours after. See Napoleon, Destined Monarch, &c.

Digitized by Google

we wish to come at here, is the identity of the ending of the mystery of God in Rev. 10:7, with the taking of the kingdom in Rev. 11:15, and the coming down from heaven in Rev. 20:1. And also the similarity of events when His feet touch the land and sea. In one passage the result is an earthquake, in the other seven thunders. The thundering and the earthquake are mentioned together in other passages. (Rev. 8:5.)

And this brings us again to the two resurrections, in two of the foregoing passages, which, though separated by an interval, are but two stages of the first resurrection mentioned in Rev. 20:5, and 1st Thess. 4:16. But the point which we wish to bring, the eagle translation, is before the tribulation; the elect translation is after it. The eagle, or first translation, has a resurrection connected with it, mentioned in 1 Thess. 4:16, as the dead in Christ that shall rise first; and the elect, or second translation, is found in Rev. 11:11, 12, and many parallel passages. There is scarcely a question of prophecy that is capable of more ample proof, —from the Psalms and Canticles, from Isaiah and Zechariah, from the Gospels and Epistles, but, more literally still, from Revelations.

We have space only for a few more remarks on the eagle translation, as positively occurring before the Apocalyptic judgments, in other words, before the tribulations. In Luke 17:34, 37: "In that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other left." When the Apostles inquired where they should be taken? The reply was, "Where the body is, there shall the eagles be gathered together." This accords with Isaiah 40:31: "They that wait for the Lord shall mount up with wings as eagles." And also with Rev. 4:7, where the flying eagle appears again; it is mentioned as the fourth beast,—a term to which some object, and well they may, in its modern signification. In the original it is living creature, and not beast, and by that name we prefer to call it. Now, the identity between these four passages is remarkable. We will number all the texts together, so that they can be examined together: Luke 17:34, 37; Matt. 24:28; Rev. 4:7; Isaiah 40:31. But how does this bear upon the resurrection? In a very important manner. Because if these passages in Luke, Isaiah, and Matthew, which all admit to refer to the translation, can be identified with the flying eagle in Rev. 4:7, it is positive evidence of the *translation before the tribulation.* For this living creature like a flying eagle was seen in heaven, positively, through an "open door in heaven" (Rev. 4:1), in the fourth and fifth chapters of Revelations, before the judgment seals of the sixth chapter were opened. They were helping to pour out these judgments from the vials of wrath, &c. If they were in heaven helping to administer the Apocalyptic judgments, they could not have been identical with those upon whom they were poured on earth. But what has this to do with the resurrection? It has much to do with it, for they were caught up at the same time; therefore the first resurrection must also have been in heaven at that time. And this proves it to be a separate resurrection from that of the slaughtered witnesses (martyred under the persecution of the Beast, or Antichrist) of Rev. 11th chapter, which was afterwards, and in point of time accords with the second translation. So intimately are they connected, that the two translations cannot be proved without proving the two resurrections, if we note their connection with synchronous events. Our next will be a further elucidation of this important subject, with other events necessarily connected with it.

A. P. J.

BATTLE SONG OF THE CHURCH.

Fear not the foe, thou flock of God;
Fear not the sword, the spear, the rod;
Fear not the foe!
He fights in vain, who fights with thee;
Soon shalt thou see his armies flee;
Himself laid low.

Come, cheer thee to the toil and fight;
'Tis God, thy God, defends the right;
He leads thee on.
His sword shall scatter every foe;
His shield shall ward off every blow;
The crown is won.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE DAY OF THE LORD AND HIS FORERUNNER.

(From the Quarterly Journal of Prophecy.)

THE Scripture says expressly, that before the end of the present dispensation, there will be a time of trial and tribulation such as the world has never yet seen,—a time when the rulers of darkness shall exercise unwonted influence, and stir up wrath, even to the uttermost, when the infidel and ungodly nations shall follow the leadings of one who is mighty to deceive by miracles and lying wonders, and engage in a vast confederacy against God and His Christ. And that time also will be signalized by the manifestation of the irresistible power of the Almighty. For then will the Lord descend to save His people, and to take vengeance on their adversaries. Then shall be the lighting down of His arm, with fury and devouring flame. Then shall be heard the voice of the Lord above the waters, and the trees of the forest shall be bowed, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken. It is a time truly of perplexity and distress of nations, which the prophets have especially characterized in their most sublime predictions as "the day of the Lord."

That day of the Lord has not yet come. True it is, that since the predictions of the inspired prophets, since our Saviour delivered His discourse concerning the fall of Jerusalem and the end of the world, there have been many fearful convulsions, many awful catastrophes, which might well cause men to look for the speedy advent of the Messiah. True it is, that already nation has risen against nation, and the great ones of the earth have been bowed down, and the haughty made low. There was the destruction of Jerusalem with its unequalled horrors; the overthrow of the vast empire of Rome. There were the religious wars consequent on the Reformation; and, lastly, there was the fearful convulsion of the French Revolution, whose troubled waves are not yet at rest, by which the whole political and social fabric was agitated. And there have been dire catastrophes in the material creation, tempests devastating the surface, the upheaval of ocean and bursting forth of subterranean fires and earthquakes, sweeping whole cities with their inhabitants into the abyss. The pestilence has held its mysterious course throughout the world, like the destroying angel who smote the firstborn of the Egyptians, silently, yet surely doing the work of death. And more, there has been, as our Lord predicted, false prophets crying peace, when there was no peace; and false Christs, arrogating to themselves a worship and honor which no created being, no, not even the angels, dare to claim, and calling on the people to trust to other mediators than Christ, and to seek for salvation by other means than His atoning blood. Such things have been, and such things are. Evil still predominates, Satan reigns in the hearts of men, spiritual wickedness is enthroned in the high places. And this corruption of sin, this taint of infidelity, this rebellious spirit against God and His laws will increase and be more fully, more openly manifested as the time of the end draws nigh. As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of man returns to judge the world. Mankind had then corrupted their ways and become wicked exceedingly. The sons of God had yielded to temptation, and been carried away in the general defection, and none remained to bear witness for the Lord save Noah, the preacher of righteousness. But he could not stay the ruin; he only delivered his own family, the little church, whom God shut in the ark. And so "many are called, but few are chosen." Our Lord himself expressly says, speaking of the latter days, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many will wax cold;" and "when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith upon the earth?" And what is the prevailing spirit of our age? Is it not strangely accordant with these solemn words of our Saviour? There is doubtless a great increase of knowledge, a great development of intellectual power. But is that knowledge sanctified by

Digitized by Google

the Spirit of God? is the aspiring intellect subordinate to the higher teachings of God's revealed Word? We fear not. The schoolmaster is indeed abroad, but seldom is the fire on the altar hallowed. There is a doubting and mistrust, a tampering with sacred things, a prying into sacred mysteries; not with feelings of awe and reverence, and of conscious weakness, but with the proud spirit of the rebel archangel, daring the Almighty to prove the truth of His word, seeking to climb to heights inaccessible to human power, and, as it were, to snatch the fire from heaven. Thus reason usurps the place of faith, and the world consecrates its idol, and bows down before it with strange incense as the infatuated multitude did of old on the plains of Dura. Are these mere ungrounded assertions? What does the prevailing literature of the day teach us? Read Carlyle, read Emerson, the mystic writings of the German school, the sophistry of our Tractarians, the open infidelity of Colenso. Do they not all proclaim their homage to a power? And to what power do they bow down? It is to genius, reason, the human mind, the comprehensive intellect which dares to soar into regions far beyond human ken. These be thy gods, O Israel! Is not all this a preparing for a foreshadowing of a power which shall yet arise, based upon subtlety and craft and cunning devices, upon high pretension and hero worship? Does it not prelude the advent of one who, exalted into the place of God, shall think to make himself equal with God, by signs and lying wonders, by changing times and seasons—even of him whom the Lord, and the Lord alone, can destroy at His coming by the blasting of the breath of His wrath?

Therefore, since these things are so, since our boasted improvements and advance in art and learning and science tend not to the real saving advantage, but rather to the moral deterioration of the ways of mankind; since infidelity is rife, and the strongholds of heathenism and superstition are rising like the cities of the Anakim, high and fenced up to heaven; since earnest and persevering Christian men can do little to stem the tide of general corruption, and wicked men wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived; there remains but one resource, one refuge for suffering humanity,—the Lord must come. He alone can solve the problem of six thousand years. He alone can overcome the adversary, can rebuke the storm, and say to the troubled waters, "Peace, be still!" But not as it was before, so shall the second coming of our Saviour be. For then He came as the despised and rejected of men, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Now He will come as a monarch, as conqueror, surrounded by the hosts of heaven. Then He endured humiliation and an ignominious death. Now He comes to take vengeance on His enemies, to rule the nations with a rod of iron, to overcome Satan and his powers. Now death shall be swallowed up in victory. This is the time which the earnest expectation of the creature has long waited for, when the promise given to Adam at the gates of Paradise shall be realized, and the seed of the woman shall finally crush the serpent's head.

That day of the Lord will come upon a careless and unthinking world like a thief in the night. They will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage. How characteristic is this description of a godless, unbelieving age, of a generation devoted to sensual enjoyment and material cares! But far different is the case with the servants of God, with those who, believing in His revealed Word, look with joyful hope for His coming. They will mark the budding of the fig-tree, and lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh. They will look for the signs which God has given, for the restoration of Israel to their land, for the outpouring of the Spirit, for the sudden rise of a mighty infidel and anti-christian power, for the concentration of the nations under one head, and the gathering of the hosts to battle—"multitudes in the valley of slaughter,"—for the Lord will come down to plead with all flesh.

When the Jewish nation have been again restored to their land,—partly by the agency of the Gentile powers, but chiefly, we believe, owing to irresistible impulse, divinely communicated, urging them onward to their ancient homes,—they must undergo much suffering and tribulation. As it was in former days, when they

Digitized by Google

trusted vainly for help in the shadow of Egypt, so it will be now. Their Gentile allies will prove to be deceitful, and the rage of the Antichrist will finally seek to accomplish their destruction. Then shall come a time of fiery trial, even that time predicted by Daniel, "When many shall be purified, and made white and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly;" a time of which our Saviour said, that then "shall there be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be." But in the hour of their utmost despondency, a gleam of light suddenly penetrates the darkness. A voice is heard in the desert, of one speaking in tones long forgotten, proclaiming again the message of mercy to a people long alienated, but now called into remembrance before God. The voice proclaims, "Comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received at the Lord's hand double for all her sins." It cannot be said that the time predicted by our Saviour has yet arrived, for the prophecy refers to a far greater trial,—to a more awful catastrophe than the destruction of the Jewish city and nation by the Romans. Neither can it be said that the voice has yet been heard proclaiming to Jerusalem that her warfare is accomplished, and her iniquity pardoned. True, that voice has been referred in the New Testament to the preaching of John the Baptist. But although John did, undoubtedly, prepare the way of the Lord, by preaching the baptism of repentance, and calling on the people to make straight in the desert a highway for their God; yet he could not announce pardon to those who had not yet filled up the measure of their fathers; to an ungodly generation, who rejected and crucified the Lord of glory. Surely the just punishment was yet to be meted out; they were to receive at the Lord's hand double for all their sins. We understand, therefore, that the prophecy of Isaiah has a deeper meaning and a further signification; and although partially fulfilled when John the Baptist, preaching in the spirit of Elias, announced our Saviour's first coming, yet its complete fulfilment must belong to a time still future, when another forerunner shall proclaim the advent of the Messiah as the deliverer of this people; when the vail shall be taken away; when their sins and iniquities shall be remembered no more.

And who is this forerunner, whose awful voice, resounding through the wilderness and along the mountain heights of Judea, shall summon the nation of Israel to turn from their idols, and prepare to meet the living God? Who shall awaken them from the long slumber of death? Who, when iniquity abounds, shall confront the Antichrist in the full pride of his power, and denounce the guilt of those who bow down before the abomination which maketh desolate?

The last words of the Old Testament bequeathed to the Church of Christ by the Holy Spirit are these: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." (Malachi 4:5, 6.)

The Spirit, then, saith expressly that Elias will come; and so we believe, and so the Jews believe, who have understood as literal all the prophecies relating to the restoration of their nation, and the second coming of their Messiah, although they could not believe in those which spoke of His sufferings and death. And if we search the whole record of Scripture, where shall we find one so especially fitted for the duty of recording the last witness for Jehovah against an infidel monarch and an ungodly people, as he who, nurtured, not in kingly courts or royal palaces, but amidst the scenes of the desert, partook in his fearless, unbending nature, of the sublimity and rugged grandeur of his solitary home, and hesitated not, at the command of his God, to encounter the wrath of an infatuated king, and to denounce the judgments of the Almighty against the idolatrous worshippers of Baal? Who so well fitted for his mission as the prophet of Horeb,—whose voice made the monarch of Israel tremble, even amidst the scene of his ungodly triumph, in the vineyard of Naboth,—whom Ahab called

Digitized by Google

especially his enemy, the enemy of one who, more than all the rulers of Israel, might be considered to be a type of the future Antichrist? For of him it is recorded, "There was none like unto Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord."

And when Antichrist is exalted on his throne, like the monarch of Babylon, king of kings, and his image is set up, like that on the plains of Dura, for the multitude to adore; when God looks down from the heaven of heavens, and determines to vindicate His power and sovereignty, He will choose out from the roll of His anointed ones, of His prophets and apostles and priests, that man whose courage never quailed, whose voice never faltered, whether in the presence of Ahab, whether on the heights of Carmel, before an angry despot or a proud priesthood; who scornfully rejected all concession, all compromise, and, casting down the idols of Baal, called on the children of Abraham to follow Jehovah, their father's God. To none can the last message of God be more surely intrusted, by none could a more faithful testimony be given, and of none will the voice be heard with greater authority, when, in the solemn tones of the prophet and martyr, it reasons of righteousness and temperance and judgment to come.

Yes, it is our consolation to believe that these things are so; that every word recorded in Holy Writ will be truly and literally fulfilled. It is our consolation to know, in these times of trouble and blasphemy, when infidel principles abound, and the powers of Antichrist are mustering for the battle, that the Lord, who sitteth in heaven, shall laugh them to scorn, for their day, the day of retribution, is at hand. The tribulation shall be but for a short time; soon the wicked shall cease from troubling, soon the weary shall be at rest. The clouds are gathering fast; already we hear the thunder peals; the earth heaves with the coming earthquakes; the fountains of the great deep are breaking up; nation is rising against nation, and the tocsin of war has sounded. What may be the course of events, we know not; but this we do know, that the triumph of evil will be short. We know that God reigns, and no harm can come to those, whether they be individuals or nations, who trust in Him. Beyond the clouds and darkness, beyond the surging foaming waters, far in the calm, serene on the horizon, bathed in the hues of heaven, rides the ark of God, bearing His Church safe, unharmed, shut in, and the powers of hell never can prevail against them; for to them God has given the victory through Him who has redeemed them out of great tribulation, and made them white in His blood. To Him be glory forever and ever.

Editorial.

WORDS FROM EUROPE.

We have spoken of the increased and increasing hold which Millenarian views have attained upon the leaders of religious thought in Great Britain. This becomes the more apparent as we increase our acquaintance with the productions which are from time to time appearing from living authors of the first standing. Even those who are not prepared to adopt all the features of the Millenarian school, are yet becoming very respectful in their manner of dealing with it, and abound with concessions to its principles, its methods of dealing with the Scriptures, and many of its leading conclusions, very different from what obtained some years ago. We rejoice in what has thus been accomplished toward a better understanding of the Sacred word, and of God's great purposes with reference to the future of our world. And, although American divines are still slow to award the subject a place in their earnest searches after the real truth of God's revelations, and put these questions from them as things mooted only by theological quacks and ignorant and fanatical people, it is plain that they will soon

Digitized by Google

have to change their tactics, and go to work in a very different and much more serious tone, or resign the field altogether, confessing that they know nothing about the matter,—a most unhappy acknowledgment to be made by a watchman whom God has charged to keep his people informed of what is coming on the earth.

We have recently been looking over the "Lectures on Genesis," by Dr. R. S. Candlish, principal of the new College, Edinburgh, a series of volumes specially recommended by the Bishop of London, in which we have found some statements which we think it worth while to transcribe for our readers. The remarks to which we refer are contained in the fifteenth Lecture, under the caption, "*The Inheritance of the land promised to Abraham.*" The texts are Gen. 13; Hebrews 11: 8–16, concerning which Dr. Candlish thus speaks:

"This is now the third occasion of the Lord's appearing to Abram, but it is the first time we find explicit mention made of what he himself is ultimately to possess. He is here, if we may so say, infiefted in the land. 'Arise,' says the Lord, 'go through it, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it.' Take a survey of it; make a measurement of it; assume investiture in the lordship of it; it is thine. 'To thee will I give it.'"

As to what was understood and intended by this, Dr. Candlish refers to the New Testament as the best commentary upon the Old, and thus states his learning of the subject:

"I. That the hope of an inheritance for himself, individually, did actually form a part of the faith of Abraham, as also of the faith of Isaac and Jacob, the Apostle Paul most expressly testifies: 'He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; and this was the promise of which he was the heir.' And the same is said of Isaac and Jacob, of Sara, and of all the 'strangers and pilgrims' of that olden time. (Heb. 11: 10, 13–16.) They not merely expected a country and a city for their posterity; they expected a country and a city *for themselves*. And what kind of country, what kind of city? A country, with reference to which they shall not have to confess, as they did in these former days with reference to the earthly Canaan, that they are merely strangers and pilgrims in it; but 'a better country, that is, an heavenly,' and a 'city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.' Such a country and such a city the Apostle distinctly assures us Abraham looked for and desired, at a time when, as Stephen says (Acts 7: 5), 'God gave him none inheritance in Canaan, no, not so much as to set his foot on.' He died in the faith of that city and country being his; 'not having received' the actual fulfilment of 'the promises, but seeing them afar off, and being persuaded of them, and embracing them.' Nowhere does Abraham receive any promise whatever of future good, or of a future inheritance, *for himself*, if it be not in the announcement, 'I will give thee this land.'

"II. That this announcement does convey such a promise, may be further argued from an expression used by the Apostle (Heb. 11: 8), when, speaking of Abraham's call, he says that 'he was to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance.' The Apostle makes no reference to Abraham's posterity; he speaks throughout of Abraham as an individual. He cannot, therefore, mean that the place in question was one which Abraham was to receive for an inheritance, in a kind of virtual sense merely, and of his seed receiving it. He describes it as a place which, though unknown to him at the time, he should yet himself receive for an inheritance. And it is on this description of the place into which Abraham was called to go out, as a place which he was really, afterwards, to possess as his own, that Paul goes on to build what he has to say respecting the patriarch's hope. Upon any other interpretation we can scarcely see how the Apostle's reasoning can have any force or meaning at all. Abraham 'sojourned,' as he says, 'in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles, as did Isaac and Jacob;' but it was the land of promise still. He had been called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, and this was that place. He knew and recognized it as such, as a place into which he had been called to go out, and which, therefore, he was hereafter to receive as an inheritance. On

Digitized by Google

this ground alone he had to rest his personal and individual hope for eternity. Thus we learn to connect the promise of a heavenly city and a heavenly country, which Abraham undoubtedly had, with the declaration respecting the place to which he was called to go out, that it was the very place which he should afterwards receive for an inheritance.

"III. Still further, the Apostle's reasoning would lead us to postpone the fulfilment of the promise now before us till after the resurrection. Consider his argument in verse 16. Abraham, and all the early pilgrim fathers, confessing that they were 'strangers and pilgrims on the earth,' still sought 'a country.' Nor would just any kind of country satisfy them; for, failing to obtain personal possession of the land of promise, they might have returned to 'the country from whence they came out.' This, however, they declined to do; and their declination the Apostle construes into a proof, not merely that they acquiesced in the arrangement by which their seed, not themselves, were to own the earthly Canaan, but that their hearts were set upon an entirely different portion; 'they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.' Then following up this exposition of their state of mind upon the subject, the Apostle brings in the remarkable statement, 'Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.'

"The statement is in itself precise and unequivocal. Nothing short of his 'having prepared for them a city' could make it suitable on the part of God to take so peculiar a title, or to stand to them in so peculiar and intimate a relation. When he consents and condescends to call himself their God, it is because he has some great thing in store for them—something worthy of himself to bestow, something corresponding to so near a connection as is implied in his being their God, and they being his people—his sons, and, therefore, his heirs; and what can that be but the 'better country, that is an heavenly,' which they 'desire.' Thus, according to the Apostle, the title, 'God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,' conveys a promise of the continuing city and the better country. But, according to our Lord, this same title conveys also a promise of the resurrection. In his argument with the Sadducees, Jesus appeals to this title as proving the resurrection of the dead (Matt. 22: 31, 32). This reasoning is very beautiful and conclusive. It rests upon the use of the present, as opposed to the past tense, in the discovery which God made of himself on the occasion referred to, when he sent his message to the Jews by Moses. God at that time announced himself, not as *having been* the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, but as *being their God still*, at the very time of his making the announcement. He said not I *was* their God while they were upon the earth, but '*I am their God now.*' But what was it that made or constituted Him their God while they were on earth? Let the Apostle answer. It was his 'having prepared for them a city.' It was in respect of this preparation of a city for them that he became their God; and he continues to be their God still, even after their departure from the earth: 'I *am* the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.' It is only, however, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as not dead but living, that he is or can be their God. The promise or preparation of a city, in respect to which alone he assumes that title, was secured to them, not as disembodied spirits, but as living men in the body. If God, therefore, is still their God, even since their removal from this world, and if his being their God is connected with the preparation of a city for them, it plainly follows that God has still a city prepared for them, and that he has it prepared for them in the prospect of their being again in precisely the same state in which they were when first, on this very ground, he 'was not ashamed to be called their God.' Otherwise God would not be faithful, if they were not identically the same persons throughout, in body as well as in soul, to whom he places himself in this relation. In plain terms, if God once constitutes himself the God of Abraham, then, so long as he continues to be his God, he must have respect to him as he was when the relation between them was first established. But Abraham was then in the body. It was with Abraham *in the body* that God dealt so graciously as not to be ashamed to be called his

Digitized by Google

God. Whatsoever privilege or promise that relation or title implies, belongs to Abraham in the body; and hence, if the Lord is still his God, it must be with reference to his living again in the body. 'God is not the God of the dead.' He never assumed this name, nor gave any of the pledges or promises which it implies, in relation to the dead, or to disembodied spirits. 'He is the God of the living.' It is with the living,—with men in the body,—that he has to do, in all that his making himself their God involves. Such is the import of our Lord's argument. It was of Abraham in the body that he condescended to become the God; it is of Abraham in the body that he is the God still; and it is to Abraham in the body that he is pledged to make good all that that name denotes. Abraham, therefore, must yet live in the body to receive the fulfilment of the promise which God gave him in the body, and in respect of which God says, not I *was*, but I *am*, the God of Abraham.

"Thus this reasoning of our Lord, to which the Sadducees could make no reply, evidently connects with the title, 'God of Abraham,' the promise of the resurrection. And Paul, as we have seen, connects with the same title the promise of the inheritance—the country and the city—for which Abraham looked. Plainly, therefore, beyond all doubt, the faith and hope of Abraham rested on what he was to receive after the resurrection; and, accordingly, the promise, 'I will give thee this land,' must be understood as having reference to the inheritance then to be enjoyed.

"But there are still two points connected with this promise which may seem to require explanation.

"I. It may be admitted that it is to this and other such promises that the Apostle Paul refers, as the ground of Abraham's hope, in looking for a heavenly city; but still it may be asked, How would the language employed by God on this occasion convey such an idea? He speaks of giving to Abraham 'this land,'—the identical land in which he is at the time a sojourner. Is it by inference that this is to be understood as indicating, in a figure, the heavenly country, of which the land of Canaan is the type? Or are we to take the words quite literally, and believe that this very land may really and actually turn out to be, in part at least, that better country itself?

"If any lean to this last interpretation, it may be safely said that there is nothing very strange or improbable in it; nothing that does violence to the ordinary views suggested in Scripture respecting the future world, or the ultimate and eternal habitation of the redeemed. There is nothing unreasonable, or at all inconsistent with Scripture, in the idea that this material earth, itself redeemed and purified, may be fitted, after the great change which it is at last to undergo, for becoming their final and blessed abode. On the contrary, not a few passages in the word of God seem to favor that notion. The 104th Psalm, for instance, as we have already seen, holds out some such prospect of the earth being renewed; and the 37th Psalm, in several of its promises, may be most simply and suitably explained, according to the letter, on this same principle (v. 11, 22, &c.). The precise recompense promised to the righteous and to the meek is their inheriting the earth on which now they suffer wrong. This, also, is consistent with what Job says of the resurrection, to which he looked forward (chap. 19: 25, 26). And, once more, the final judgment of fire is compared (2 Pet. 3) to the judgment of the flood, from which the earth emerged anew prepared for man's habitation; and so, accordingly, we read of there being new heavens and a new earth,—the earth still subsisting, only purified by fire and made new. Other expressions, no doubt, may be cited, which at first sight may seem to be at variance with this view; but these, on a closer inspection, will generally be found to be irrelevant and indecisive as to the real question at issue. Certainly there is nothing contrary to analogy or to sound doctrine in the opinion that the risen and glorified saints of God are finally to occupy this planet of ours; this spot which, of all creation, is become the most remarkable; the scene where the Redeemer accomplished his work of grace, where he will hereafter consummate his work of judgment, and where, after the purifying deluge of fire, he may forever go in and

Digitized by Google

out among his redeemed in glory. The dead raised, and the living changed, after being caught up to meet him in the air, may again, when all is over, inhabit the renovated earth; and it may be there, in that future world of purity and bliss, framed from the wreck of this present world of guilt and woe, that they are to be forever with the Lord. Some local habitation they must have, and it may be this planet as well as any other, the fall being remedied and paradise restored. According to this view of the ultimate seat of the heavenly blessedness, it is easy to see how Abraham might understand the promise, 'To *thee* will I give the land.'

"II. Another observation remains to be made. The Apostolic commentary on which we have built so much cannot possibly refer to anything short of the final and eternal inheritance of glory. To that, and to nothing short of that, did the patriarch look forward. The land of Canaan, and the earth of which it forms a part, may, for anything we can tell, be the local seat and scene of the inheritance of which Paul speaks, but it is plainly, wherever located, the eternal inheritance that he means.

"Thus viewed, then, the promise made to Abraham may have respect to three successive events or stages of fulfilment. 1. The land is given to him to be possessed by his natural seed, in the manner more particularly specified in a subsequent renewal of the promise (chap. 15: 13–16). . . 2. Later prophecies seem to announce that Israel may again occupy the land, and on better terms. (Jer. 31: 31–34, and Ezekiel 36: 25–28). . . Still, Israel's occupancy of the land during any period prior to the entire renewal of the face of the earth, however permanent and peaceful, must be but as a pilgrimage, or a passing sojourn, when compared to the ages of eternity. 3. A third fulfilment, therefore, is required to exhaust the full meaning of the promise. Not an earthly country, but a better, even an heavenly, is given to Abraham and his seed,—to Abraham and his seed in the highest sense of the expression, —to the risen saints of God, a continuing city, even an eternal heritage.

"Nor let it be overlooked, as a practical improvement of the doctrine which would identify the eternal inheritance of the saints with the renovated earth, and even Abraham's peculiar portion of it with the Holy Land, that if, on the one hand, it may seem to attach something of the character of earth to the future heaven, it surely tends, on the other hand, to impart something of the holy elevation of heaven to this present earth. There may be a risk of making the eternal state, in our conceptions of it, too gross and material; but there is danger also in the dreamy and ideal spiritualizing, which would refine away all matter, and which ultimately comes very near the notion of absorption into the Infinite Mind. The personal reality of hope, as well as the personal responsibility of sense, is thus turned into a dim abstraction. But the resurrection of the body and the renewal of the earth, realized as events still to come, stamp a present value and importance upon both; and the reflection the very body which I now wear is to rise again, and the very earth on which I tread is to be my habitation hereafter, arrests me when I am tempted to make my body the instrument, or this earth the scene, of aught that would but ill accord with the glorious fashion of the one or the renewed face of the other (Phil. 3: 21; Ps. 104: 30)."

So, also, in the seventeenth Lecture, Dr. Candlish says: "The periods noted in the Revelations of John are manifestly near their fulfilment. Like the parents of Moses, therefore, at the end of the four hundred years, and Daniel, at the close of the seventy, and aged Simeon, when the weeks of Daniel were expired, so let the Church now betake herself to confession and watching, and prayer, giving heed to that 'sure word of prophecy, which is as a light that shineth in a dark place,' not clearly enough, perhaps, to satisfy a speculative curiosity as to the particulars of the approaching sunrise, but yet sufficiently for the exercise of faith and patience, 'until the day dawn and the daystar' appear to usher in the glorious morn." . . . "Looking for Christ now is waiting for him, with 'loins girt and lamps burning.' It is watching also, as not knowing at what hour the

Digitized by Google

Master may come; but yet, 'knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep, (Rom. 13: 11)."

How good and gracious is the kind providence of God, that now, as the shadows of the last great woes are casting themselves across the world, and the night of trial and judgment is at hand, so many men, and appointed watchmen, are being aroused from the apathy and stupor which has so long hung upon the Church with reference to these things, and are earnestly calling upon their fellow men to make ready, for that the Great Day is verily at the door! The Lord give us, and each reader, grace to stand in that day, and a portion with Abraham in that city which is yet to come!

TALK WITH OUR READERS ABOUT COMMON THINGS.

DEMONISM ALIAS SPIRITUALISM. NO. 5.

3. *The Holy Scriptures inform us that the seducing spirits will speak lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron.*

This is another most striking and fearful characteristic. These few words of the holy Scriptures daguerreotype them to the life. We find, from Romans 1, that the mark of a reprobate mind is not only to commit things worthy of death, but to "have pleasure in them that do them." This is just what these spirits do; and not only so, but they are utterly without any kind of compunction, and they *deliberately* speak and teach the greatest villanies, while at the same time they know, as well as can possibly be known, that what they say is the most barefaced lie. With them it is become *a matter of cool deliberate calculation* how most successfully to ruin souls, and how to entice the greatest number. It is altogether *an intellectual operation*, with which circumstances and feelings have nothing whatever to do. Their consciences are seared with a hot iron. But, at the same time, they are too cunning to let their lies appear as such. Like their master when he is seen in heaven as the accuser of the saints, they are clothed in garments of light. They are masters of hypocrisy. They pretend to have the welfare of the human race at heart, as their great object. Hence they extol virtue, love wisdom, goodness, truth and justice, and pretend to base all their teachings on them. They laud the perfectibility of human nature to the skies; they say that man has long been held in bondage by the force of *circumstances*, and that all he needs is *development*, which by their aid he may obtain. They "promise him *liberty*," and repeat the old tactics which their master practised in Eden. "Progress!" "Light!" is the cry. "Progression," "Reform," "Perfection," are the mottoes. They paint seraphic beauties, which inwardly are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. As we have already shown, they deny every doctrine of the Bible; but at the same time, when it suits their purpose, these consummate masters of hypocrisy and lies, utterly dead to any compunction, just like their master, readily quote the Bible to fortify their teachings. They are ravening wolves in sheep's clothing. They look like lambs, but speak as dragons. Those who are skilled in heavenly truth detect their bad pronunciation, otherwise their craft is so consummate that the very elect might be deceived with the utterances they put forth from the secret chambers.

Their publications afford a sample of their shameless lies in hypocrisy. Let all be warned, for the time will come when the angel shall proclaim with a loud voice, "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name." (Rev. 14.) This is the end of the pretended remodelling and "regeneration of society," after which the world, listening to the siren songs of demons, is madly rushing! A just judgment for rejecting the Father's only begotten and well-beloved Son, and refusing Him, the legitimate King.

The "spirits" are also adepts at another thing,

Digitized by Google

viz., *mixing* truth with falsehood, so as to render the lies undistinguishable, as poisonous drugs are sugar-coated to conceal their nauseous taste. Beware of these sugar-coated pills. Here and there, too, we find that their mouth-pieces handle certain abstruse subjects (such as sleep and death) with great ability, and perhaps present some psychological facts that have hitherto been overlooked or unknown. And all this makes the great latter-day snare more dangerous, by giving it more attractiveness and a scientific air.

But what does their boasted progress and light really amount to? Let some reclaimed votaries of the wicked system tell us.

Dr. Randolph, for eight years a medium and lecturer, and hence well acquainted with all its workings, in his renunciation of the system, makes the following confession: "A. J. Davis and his clique of Harmonialists say there are no evil spirits. I emphatically deny the statement. Five of my friends destroyed themselves, and I attempted it, by *direct spirit influence.* Every crime in the calendar has been committed by mortal movers of viewless beings. It has also broken up families, squandered fortunes, tempted and destroyed the weak. It has banished peace from families, separated husbands and wives, and shattered the intellects of thousands." "Look on this picture, and look on that." Dr. Hatch, another reformed "spiritualist," says: "The most damning iniquities are perpetrated in 'spiritual circles,' a very small percentage of which ever comes to public attention. I care not whether it be spiritual or mundane. The *facts* exist, and should demand the attention and condemnation of an intelligent community."

T. L. Harris, another prominent renouncer of "spiritualism," says: "Murder, adultery, suicide, and the most revolting blasphemies, may be traced directly to the communications and puttings forth of impure spirits, both in ancient and modern times. And so far as I am able to judge, the majority of such instances are traceable to the habit of attending *seances. I earnestly call attention to this point.* The man of iron nerves may say that he feels no change of state. He may laugh down the idea of peril. With him it is but a question of time. The vitriol that eats in a day through iron wire has but to continue the process to eat through the iron bar. *'It is slow, this poison, but sure.' If you do not wish to become yourselves demoniacs, shun the place and shun the occasion.* To the pure, and to those who would remain pure, I can hint *such reasons as, if uttered, would make every ear tingle.*"

No doubt the loosening of time-honored and salutary restraints, and maturity in latter-day wickedness, makes "spiritualism" in its present shape possible. But what can we say, when even pious men's writings show that they, too, believe that the world is advancing, and when they are continually referring, with satisfaction, to the civilization of the nineteenth century.?

Once more we say, let all men avoid "spiritualism," and its demon teachings and siren enticements, as they would the fire; lest they end by falling into the fire that cannot be quenched, and by becoming a prey to the worm that dieth not!

Our remarks under this head have had reference to the hypocritical teachings of "spiritualism," but it is also true that the demons, when consulted for advice, or an expression of opinion regarding the ordinary affairs and occurrences of life, very often (though not always) mislead the questioners, and occasionally make merry over their easy credulity. So, also, if, with a view to testing their character, they are asked questions respecting the Christian faith, they do not scruple to tell lies in hypocrisy.

We find the following, in a letter from a friend: "They are to speak lies in hypocrisy." They do this to my knowledge. The word hypocrisy can apply to nothing else but a pretence of religion. To deceive the religious this they will make; but none of them will stand the test St. John institutes. "Try the spirits," he says; if they confess not that Jesus is come in the flesh, they are Antichrist. This does not allude to their confession, historically made, that there is such a man, for they will confess that; but that which *the name Jesus* signifies, the *Saviour*, —the Saviour in the only way, that of shedding his blood for the remission of sins. A friend of mine was about being deceived by them,

Digitized by Google

because they said they believed in the Saviour. I told her to try them as St. John did,—to ask the medium plainly if she believed that Jesus died for the sins of the world. It was a celebrated medium, who professed to be very pious, when with pious people. She would talk about bearing the cross, and of suffering for her belief—all to deceive. This friend, who wanted to converse with her deceased daughter through the medium, was assured that she (the medium) was a believer in Jesus. I had tried to induce my friend not to go; but she promised me that, if she did, she would try the medium's faith in the Saviour, according to the test of St. John. She went, and had a satisfactory conversation with her daughter, as she supposed—for she said her very tone of voice was exactly imitated; she was also reminded of actual occurrences that had transpired, &c. The deception was so complete, and she was so anxious to believe that she had really communed with her daughter, that she did not want to be undeceived. But she had promised to make the test, and she did. At first the medium answered (or rather the spirit speaking through her), Oh yes, she believed in Jesus; she thought he was a lovely character,—and admitted that we ought to live like him. But when she was asked whether she believed that he died for our sins, and that we have remission of sins through faith in his blood, she became angry, and said she believed no such thing. She was asked whether she didn't believe what the Bible says on that subject? She said, No. That there were some very good things in the Bible, but there were a great many mistakes; and they didn't take it for their guide—they had higher instruction from the spirits. This is but one instance out of several that I have known, where the spirits confessed nearly all the truths of the Gospel; pretending to be very pious, until questioned on the subject of the vicarious sufferings of Christ; and that moment they denied the faith, and the whole framework of their deception was manifested. But this will serve as a sample of their telling lies in hypocrisy."

Let our readers ever recollect that it is demons who preside over these spiritual circles. Nothing but diabolical wickedness could ever speak such unconscionable lies in hypocrisy.

BRIEFS ON PROPHETIC THEMES. By a member of the Boston Bar. E. P. Dutton & Co. 1864. Boston.

This is the title of a work of one hundred and twelve pages, which has recently come into our hands. The contents are, "The Prophetic Earth of Daniel and the Revelation. Scripture Symbols of the rise, decline, and fall of the four great Gentile Powers." "The Literal Babylon of Prophecy. Its final destruction coincident with the future restoration of Israel." "The Symbolic Babylon of Prophecy. Its composite character, including not Romanism only, but all forms of false religion and infidelity." "The Antichrist of Prophecy." "Israel and Jerusalem of Prophecy. God's covenants concerning them, and their final exaltation."

We hail this book as an evidence that the laity of the church are waking up to the study of prophecy, though so many of the ministers of the church pass it by as useless. This work shows that its author, who is a member of the Boston Bar, is a close student of the Scriptures, and that he has included in his studies those prophetical revelations contained in the word of God which a very large number of those appointed to be guides and leaders of the flock of Christ altogether neglect. He has treated his subjects in an able manner. With all the positions he takes, however, we are not prepared to agree. One great feature of the work we are much pleased with, and that is the strictly literal manner in which prophecy is interpreted. The chapter on "The Antichrist of Prophecy" is excellent; and altogether the book is well worth a perusal.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. MARCH, 1865. No. 3.

Special Contributions.

CLIPPINGS OF ITEMS.

THE INFIDELITY OF THE DAY.

(From the Western Episcopalian.)

AMONGST the recent charges of the English Bishops and Archdeacons, we have seen none which touches upon the infidelity of the day with more force and spirit than that of Archdeacon Garbett. He thus speaks of the times in which we live:

"And now forgive me, if, for a moment, I direct your attention to the times in which we live, nay, to the very days and hours passing over our heads, as eminently critical. They are big with results for Christ's Church. They demand, therefore, a spirit and energy, and a yielding up of all our faculties, commensurate to their importance. This is the more to be insisted upon, because there is, often-times, among us, an indolent and abject submission of the soul to the present. Even in the midst of an extraordinary epoch, you find men living as in a dream, regarding the present as the normal and necessary condition of the world, or as a mere repetition of the past. No doubt this indolence of assent, and easy submission to things as they are, is innocent enough in the periods of repose which are intercalated between those revolutionary paroxysms which shake, from time to time, as they are shaking now, Commonwealths and Churches. Such times are as necessary to evolve the destinies of the human race as they have been to evolve the structure and actual configuration of the planet in which we live. It does matter little, in these uncritical intervals of history, whether we underrate or exaggerate the present, or permit it to pass by us as in a vision, without a firm grasp of it at all. Not so, however, when a new intellectual, social, or religious phase, is being generated from the destruction or modification of the ancient elements, and of which a certain indefinite restlessness and termination of men's minds is an invariable prognostic. The duties which we have then to discharge, and the whole line in which our exertions are called upon to move, depend upon our understanding the true importance and real tendencies of passing events and measures. The final issue may be greatly modified by a clear and prophetic discernment of them. A misapprehension of them is ruin. And this, too, ought to be well observed; although the final issue of a great and tempestuous period appears, when it comes, sudden, as well as overwhelming, yet sudden it really never is. It seems, indeed, unaccountable to those who have been negligent of its symptoms, or inapt to discern the inexorable connection between cause and effect. But its preparation is really slow. Its advance is gradual. The result, from the previously given religious or political data, is perfectly assignable by a true and enlarged philosophy. Moreover, theologically considered, in Almighty God's dealings with the world at large, with nations and individuals, there is the same patience and long-suffering, with indications and flashes of the coming judgment intermingled. There is the same withholding of the fatal blow, the like invitations and opportunities of repentance, the like trial of men's spirits, and of alternate repose and threatenings. These great revolutions,

Digitized by Google

like that now in progress, silently mature their elements, and come on, in fact, like a great tempest in summer. There is a long gathering of the clouds, and then the day is obscured, and there are distant mutterings of thunder, and droppings of rain. And then, for a time, there is sunshine again, and the vapors seem about to disperse and vanish into the clear firmament. We say to ourselves that, after all, our forebodings were groundless, and there will be at any rate no tempest to-day; and so we turn unconcernedly to our ordinary occupations again. And then, on a sudden, when men cry 'Peace, peace,'—we know not how, the storm breaks. All the elements are let loose; and the lightnings, and the mighty thunderings, and hail, are upon us, and there is no escape. It is needless to point the moral. There may be bright intervals in these most perilous times for Christ's Church. But let no man deceive himself, or the hour of sure destruction will come upon him like a thief in the night on the helpless and foolish sleeper. There is only one safety,—to be ever on the watch, and armed. *Una salus nullam sperare salutem.* We must look for it, and be ready for the worst. God will help them who, in faith and in the path of obedience, are ready to help themselves."

—

DEAN ALVORD ON THE STATE OF ROME.

In *Good Words* for June, p. 469, is an article on "Rome," by the Dean of Canterbury, from which we quote the following passages:

"Rome is essentially a pagan city. Her churches, numerous as the days in the year, rise everywhere around you. Bells are continually going; the commemoration of saints and martyrs is endless. Yet, with very rare exceptions indeed, the worship of the people in those churches has nothing in common with Christianity. It is not even the one God of Jews and Christians who, as a matter of fact, is adored in them; it is not He whom Christians believe to be God, blessed forever, incarnate in the flesh of man. God has passed out from the practical worship of this people; the Son of God has, as a matter of fact, ceased to be an object of their adoration. The Eternal Father is found in their pictures as an old man, the Divine Saviour as a little child; but both are subservient, and nearly all their worship is subservient, to one purpose,—to the glorification of a great goddess, and, after her, not of the Father, Son, nor Spirit, but of a host of men and women, made into objects of adoration by themselves, and, whatever may be alleged to the contrary, clothed, as she is pre-eminently clothed, with the incommunicable attributes of the Godhead itself.

"I know I am making strong assertions. But the facts themselves are stronger. I shall have to adduce them somewhat in abundance, by and by. But now I will go on to say more.

"The Jewish Church had fallen far in the time of our Lord's ministry on earth; but the Romish Church has fallen further now. The demon of idolatry had been cast out by the judgment of the captivity. His habitation had been left empty and garnished; and he had returned, not in the same form, but in the worse shape of hypocrisy. In the system of the modern Church of Rome, not only are hypocrisy and lying tolerated and encouraged, but idolatry, gross as that of Nineveh or Greece, and grosser than that of Imperial Rome, has entered and repossessed her people.

"More is yet behind. There is hardly a charge brought by our blessed Lord against the Scribes and Pharisees in St. Matthew xxiii, which does not find examples among the priesthood of modern Rome. . . . . The system, as now laid down, and now practised, is one of hypocrisy, of extortion, of falsehood, of cruelty."

—

SIGNIFICANT SIGNS IN THE HOLY LAND.

The November number of *Jewish Intelligence* contains some striking facts from a letter of J. Barclay. He says:

"You ask whether there are any palpable symptoms of the events we desire? To this I think it can be replied, without any undue enthusiasm, that symptoms are becoming manifest that Jerusalem is no longer the city after which no man seeks. We see them in the increasing numbers of intelligent and noble visitors, from all parts of the world; we see them in the awakened interest of the nations,

Digitized by Google

embodied in spacious and beautiful buildings, especially in the stupendous pile (including a Cathedral) erected by the Russians on the camp of the Assyrians; we see them in the proposal to connect the Holy City with the other capitals of Europe by the telegraph, which is already finished as far as Jaffa; we see them in the new road about to be constructed from the sea-coast, and in the plan to bring once again water from Solomon's pools, to supply and purify the city; we see them in the great influx of Jews, who have fled from the north coast of Africa, for protection, to the city of their fathers; we see them in the clearing and widening of the streets by the military during the past week, by order of the Sultan; and we see them in the increasing spread of light and knowledge of the truth, amongst the resident Jews."

The Rev. W. Bailey also gives the following:

"Jerusalem, which is generally so quiet at this season, has been all astir this week, in consequence of an order from the Porte that all the streets should be levelled and paved, and that all undue projections in the same should be removed. The order has been executed in true Turkish style, and many a tale of loss and oppression can probably be told by the poor storekeepers and some house-owners; but the improvement to the city, and the public benefit, will be great; we shall now have, comparatively, broad and airy streets, where before we could scarcely move. When the work is completed, it will indeed prove an advance in civilized effort, and quite an achievement for Turkey. The Jews are very much concerned about this gathering up the stones and making broad the ways of Jerusalem; they say, 'Now we are certain Messiah's coming is very near.'

"You have, perhaps, heard that there is a telegraph at Jaffa, which connects Egypt with Beyrout. It is now decided, I believe, that a branch line is to be made to this city. I also find it is very probable we shall ere long have a carriage road to Jaffa, as two engineers, one English, the other Turkish, report says, are to arrive here in a few days to make preparation for it. A survey for a railway has already been completed, and a plan sixty feet long, to lay before the Sultan, left here about a month ago. I do not think, however, that the time for a railroad in these parts has yet arrived. Jaffa is now undergoing a similar change to Jerusalem; a number of coffee and other unsightly shops, outside the gate on the Jerusalem road, are to be removed, and the land sold, with the condition that it shall be built upon; another gate is also to be made. Our Pasha went three days ago to see that these important changes and improvements are properly done. A better landing-place from the sea was nearly completed last week, and it is just possible that ere long a light-house may be built near it. Soon there is to be a light-house on Mount Carmel; and two or three others, it is said, will soon be placed on the Syrian coast. We have now two lines of English steamers touching monthly at Jaffa, in addition to the usual foreign ones, and the French will henceforth come oftener than formerly; thus Jerusalem and the Holy Land will necessarily be brought more than ever into notice. Surely these, and many like changes which are taking place around us, have much meaning in them. I must believe they have.

"On Saturday morning last we had heavy showers of rain, such as only fall in winter. Those who have been in Jerusalem many years, and many Turks who were born here, say they never before saw so much rain at this season. About eight years ago, on the twelfth of this month, a slight shower or two fell, but more than that cannot be remembered."

[This closing paragraph refers to the prophecies contained in Jer. 3: 3, Joel 2: 23, and Zech. 10: 1, in connection with the remarkable fact that, after a period of centuries, marked by the entire lack of the rains referred to, they have lately shown symptoms of recurrence, after the old Scriptural order.]

—

THE WORK OF SPIRITUALISM.

At the six days' convention in Boston, commencing May 21st, 1864, several resolutions were presented, expressing the purposes of the Spiritualists. It will be seen, from the following ones, what they intend to accomplish:

Digitized by Google

"*Resolved*, That Spiritualism adopts and republishes all that is true in the *religion* of the Indian, the Egyptian, the Hebrew, the Mohammedan and the Christian; and demonstrates again and anew the brotherhood of the race, the immortality of the soul, and the actuality of spirit-intercourse.

"*Resolved*, That Science—not 'Theology'—interprets the nature and constitution of the mind, the health and beauty of the body, and fittingly translates the wealth of nature, the *poverty* of the ages, and the *best* methods for making reform sure, *charity* practical, and civilization humane.

"*Resolved*, That the future progress and larger usefulness of Spiritualism authorizes the construction of the 'Science of Life,' which will comprehend all known truth, religious, moral, legal, social, domestic, and conjugal; and, as soon as may be, that its members organize such issues as will bring every department of society up for review and reconstruction.

"*Resolved*, That modern Spiritualism, as understood and advocated by its representative minds, is the culmination of the Spiritualism of all ages; and, with a rational interpretation, accepts, for their moral and historical value, the religious records of Judaism, of primitive Christianity, and of every age and nation, without adopting any of them as infallible and final authority.

"*Resolved*, That we recognize in works like those of Colenso, Renan, and other theological agitators, both in Europe and America, and in the improving tone of literature in every department, signs of encouragement in the great cause of ecclesiastical freedom.

"*Resolved*, That individual conscience, under the quickening and illumining influences of angel intelligence, is the only reliable guide of faith and life; and Spiritualists, therefore, ignore the authority of sects and institutions, in seeking to erect arbitrary standards of creed and discipline.

"*Whereas*, The present systems of civil polity, ecclesiasticism, trade, commerce, education, social life, science, and philosophy, are radically defective in ignoring the elements and principles now being unfolded in the light of the congregated intelligences of the eternal world; therefore,

"*Resolved*, That the time has come, amid the revolutions now agitating our country, when Spiritualists, and all who can co-operate with them, should come into council, to discuss the best methods of action or organization, whereby these elements and principles may be effectually applied and carried out to the reconstruction of church, state, and society in every department, and to the adoption of new systems, to take the place of the 'old earth and heavens,' destined to pass away."—(*From The World's Crisis.*)

—

THE SUEZ CANAL.

NAPOLEON III is constructing a canal across the Isthmus of Suez large enough for ships to pass. This is a most important enterprise, and will give Napoleon the key to the Eastern waters, and a great advantage in commercial matters over England and other nations. The English came to the conclusion that it was not practicable to build a canal across the Isthmus, and abandoned the undertaking, when it was taken up by Bonaparte. An English writer, when speaking of this work a few weeks since, says:

"It promises to be ready by 1866; and, when it is opened for large vessels, what an uproar it will create in Western Europe. It will command the route to India; it will equally command or shorten the route to the gold fields of Australia. Hostile ships can pass without restriction, and without giving any explanation of their objects. In the meantime, France is occupied incessantly in the building of iron ships. Every month we hear of the launching of some new iron-clad. Italy has a powerful iron squadron, which will, of course, be at the full disposal of France. The opening of the Suez canal . . . promises to create an entirely new epoch in the affairs of the world. It will throw the three continents into one, and will make him who is arbiter of Europe, arbiter of the whole prophetic earth, and of the remotest frontiers of the Roman empire. France has acquired, long ago, a firm footing on the African continent, on the coast of the Red Sea.

Digitized by Google

When she has become mistress of the Suez canal, having also a depot on the African coast of the Red Sea, she will completely command the highway of the earth; and, to make assurance still surer, she is now actively negotiating in Madagascar, which lies in the way to the East. She possesses another stepping-stone in the Isle of Bourbon,—another depot for naval stores. In short, the completion of the Suez canal will finish the . . . 'circumvallation of the globe, . . . and will place the British empire in the position of a city invested by a hostile army.'"—(*Crisis.*)

—

CRIME IN ENGLAND.

THE London Morning *Post* thus speaks of Baron Martin's charge at the opening of the Liverpool assizes:

"Never before, says Baron Martin, in the course of his whole judicial experience, has he seen so heavy a calendar. With the single exception of treason, it enjoys the unenviable distinction of embracing every crime under Heaven which can render a man obnoxious to the laws of England. Four murders, fourteen cases of manslaughter, twenty-four of burglary, are among the products of this ominous jail delivery. Rape, robbery, stabbing, and a host of minor offences, have all had their separate representatives. If we need any stimulus to increased exertion in the cause of morality, it is amply supplied in the list of prisoners undergoing their trial at the present moment in one country town alone. Little flattering as the conclusion may be to our national vanity, we doubt not whether the Liverpool Calendar be not a very tolerable index of the state of crime all over the country. Within a few weeks we have been called upon to chronicle a succession of homicides, alike repulsive in their barbarous details, and apparently destitute of any adequate incentives. The wretched child who fell a victim to the knife of the assassin in an obscure Wiltshire village could scarcely have excited the resentment of his murderer, and might even have been safe from his fears. Yet innocence and helplessness in this case are no security against a cruelty the most apparently purposeless and gratuitous we ever remember. Not to dwell on minor atrocities, we have one case in which a few angry words between two fellow-servants at a lonely farm, on a lonely hillside, resulted in the deliberate butchery of a female. Another woman was sent to her last account in consequence of a lover's quarrel, originating in an ineffectual attempt upon the part of her admirer to tender some good advice. Its ill reception by the object of his affections piqued him, and the death of the girl was apparently the only thing which could give relief to his wounded feelings. A still darker tragedy yet awaits investigation at the hands of justice. A single night proved fatal, in one of the suburbs of the metropolis itself, to no less than four unoffending individuals. Of five inmates of the dwelling, one alone survives. Mother, brothers, and affianced bride, all perished, undoubtedly by the same knife. While such things can still occur at our very doors, it is vain to plume ourselves upon a civilization and refinement which yet abounds with passages worthy of the recent savage episodes of Lebanon or Damascus."

—

THE HARVEST OF THE EARTH.

"WHO is it comes from Edom,"
With garments stained and red,
With sword and sickle in *His* hand,
And "crowns upon His head?"
It is the great Avenger,
Who comes, with "judgments, sore,"
To reap the earth's wide harvest,
And spread "His threshing floor!"

He comes to "tread the wine-press,"
The gathered grapes of wrath,
And leave the trace of human blood
Along *His* battle-path;
To trample on a thousand hearts
By desolating war,
While love's sweet blossoms, pale and dead,
Lie crushed beneath His car!

He comes with noiseless pestilence,
Whose fever-tainted breath
Is bearing many an idol's form
To the charnel-house of Death.

Digitized by Google

He comes by flood and fire,
To touch our wealth to-day;
To undermine our golden hopes,
And sweep their props away.

He comes to "make His jewels up,"
To deck His royal crown,
And from their proud, high pinnacle,
To cast the wicked down.
He comes to shield His "chosen ones,"
To put His foes to shame,
And write, in fiery sentences,
His mission and His name!

He'll come with sounding trumpet,
The clouds, *His* banners bright,
And that unnumbered host of God,
Clothed in immortal light,
To marshal all His forces—
The armies of the world—
For His flag of truce, so long held out,
Is slowly being furled.

He'll wrap, in windingsheets of flame,
This sin-cursed planet then,
Restore it to its pristine form—
A paradise for men.
Then health, and happiness, and peace,
In every breast shall dwell,
And one unbroken strain of praise,
From every heart shall swell.

FLORENCE.

WILDERNESS, August, 1864.

THE PREPARATION.

BY J. C. RYLE.

IF we would grow in grace, and have a more lively hope, we must seek more preparedness for Christ's second coming. I know no doctrine more sanctifying and quickening than the doctrine of Christ's second advent. I know none more calculated to draw us from the world, and make us single-eyed, whole-hearted, and joyful Christians. But, alas! how few believers live like men who wait for their Master's return. Who, that narrowly observes the ways of many believers, would ever think that they lived and longed for their Lord's appearing? Is it not true that there are many hearts among God's children which are not quite ready to receive Jesus? He would find the window barred, the door shut, the fires almost out. It would be a cold and comfortless reception. Oh! believing reader, it ought not to be so. We want more of a pilgrim's spirit;—we ought to be ever looking for and hastening to our home. The day of the Lord's advent is the day of rest,—the day of complete redemption,—the day when the family of God shall be all gathered together. It is the day when we shall no longer walk by faith, but by sight:—we shall see that land that is far off,—we shall behold the King in His beauty. Surely we ought to be saying, daily, "Come, Lord Jesus; let Thy kingdom come." Oh! let us set Christ's advent continually before our eyes. Let us say to ourselves, every morning, "The Lord will soon return," and it will be good for our souls.

THE LORD'S COMING.

REASONS FOR PRAYING FOR IT.

1. IT will bring glory to the Father. 1 Thes. 1:10; Phil. 2:9, 10, 11; Ps. 24; Rev. 15:3, 4; Titus 2:13, 14; 1 Cor. 15:24, 28; Ps. 40; Luke 13:32; Matt. 6:9, 10.

2. It is the desire of Christ. John 17:24; Ps. 20:22–31; Is. 53:11; John 14: 2, 3; Is. 63:4; Cant. 2:8; 3:11.

3. It is the desire of the Spirit. Rev. 22:17; Rom. 8:23.

4. It is the end of the sin and sorrow of the Church. Is. 25:8; 2 Thess. 1:7, 8; Jude 24, 25; 1 John 3:2, 3; 2 Peter 2:10, 11, 12; Heb. 11:14; 2 Peter 3:13, 14; Heb. 9:28; 13:14; Acts 1:11; Jude 14, 15, 21.

5. Prayer for the Lord's coming is an evidence of our belonging to Christ. 2 Tim. 4:8; Is. 64:1–4; 2 Pet. 3:11, 12, (*Margin.*)

6. It prevents Christians from setting their affections upon the things of the world. Heb. 10:34–37; Heb. 11:24–26, 39, 40; Heb. 12:1, 2.

7. It is especially commanded, for the sake of Israel. Is. 62:1, 6, 7.

8. It will hasten the conversion of all who are to become the people of God, according to the promise of the latter rain in the latter days. Zech. 10:1; Joel 2:23–32.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE JUDGMENT NOT SIMULTANEOUS.

FROM "PLAIN PAPERS ON PROPHETIC SUBJECTS."

Do not many passages of Scripture teach, that immediately upon Christ's coming, a simultaneous and universal judgment will take place, embracing both the righteous and the wicked of all ages?

Before considering the passages alleged in support of this question, we would remark, First, that there is no question as to the universality of the judgment. That all must appear before God for judgment, no one questions for a moment. Nor is it fair to represent us as "*admitting*" this. We more than "admit"—we *earnestly maintain* and *would solemnly press* it upon all. Passages, therefore, which simply teach that all will be judged, are beside the question. They only prove what we maintain as earnestly as those who urge the objection. Secondly, all are agreed, that it is the second coming of Christ which introduces this judgment. The judgment of all men ensues upon the coming of Christ. Passages, therefore, which simply represent Christ as coming to judgment—to the judgment both of righteous and wicked, are—equally with the former class—apart from the question. The question is, *as to the simultaneous judgment of the whole race of mankind immediately on Christ's coming*. Where are the passages which declare this? Thirdly, while there are many passages which affirm the judgment to be universal, there are others which unequivocally testify that *in one sense*—that of being called in question as to eternal life or eternal death—believers have already passed through judgment in the person of Christ, and, that *in this sense* no judgment remains for them. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, *and shall not come into judgment* (καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται), but is passed from death unto life." (John 5 : 24.) Accordingly, in the context of this passage, our Lord divides the resurrection itself into "the resurrection of life" and the "resurrection of judgment" (ἀνάστασις κρίσεως). There are those who will rise to be judged; and there are others who will rise by virtue of a life which places them beyond the reach of judgment as to life or death. Evidently *the possessor of everlasting life* needs not to be judged, and cannot be, as to whether everlasting life is to be his or not. Heb. 11 : 27, 28, gives expression to the same truth. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Men, as such, in their natural state of sin and condemnation, have before them death and judgment. The believer has death and judgment behind him, substitutionally borne by Christ on the cross; and he has before him as his blessed hope the second appearing of Christ, for whom he looks. His appearing without sin unto salvation. Believers are, as to their persons, accepted in Christ; their security therefore can no more be called in question than that of Him in whom they are accepted. Fourthly, the works of believers must all nevertheless be brought into judgment. 1 Cor. 3, shows us that there will be those who, because builded on the one only foundation, will themselves be saved, whose works will, as unable to bear the test of the fire of that day, be burned up. Beyond question, we must, in this sense, "all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." But, finally, the way in which believers are placed before that judgment-seat, demonstrates more than anything besides, that they are not there to be tried for life or death. How is it that the saints reach that solemn tribunal? *By being changed or raised at the very moment of Christ's descent, and by being caught up to meet Him in the air!* Whether the coming of Christ be pre- or post-millennial—all must

Digitized by Google

agree that the very first, the *immediate* effect, of His coming is the resurrection, the change, and the translation into the air of His own people. It is thus, and only thus, that they are placed before the judgment-seat of Christ. And shall they appear there, in bodies fashioned and made like unto Christ's own glorious body, to have the question tried whether they savingly belong to Christ? Impossible! Nay, more; where Christ is represented as being manifested, or as coming in judgment on the wicked, His saints are represented as coming with Him. "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints, to execute judgment upon all." Are these saints, who thus accompany the Lord, to take their place among those on whom the judgment is to be executed, and only be afresh separated from among them, as the result of a judicial process? Incomprehensible as is such a thought, this, and much worse than this, is necessarily involved in the doctrine of a simultaneous judgment of all mankind, from Adam downwards, immediately to ensue on the coming of Christ. But if there are passages supposed to support or to teach such a notion, let them by all means be examined.

Rev. 21 : 7, 8, is adduced in support of the theory of a simultaneous judgment of all mankind at Christ's coming. But a mere glance at the passage shows that it is a declaration of the final results of what all agree in admitting to be the last judgment—that of the great white throne—and therefore proves nothing for or against the doctrine in question. So of Rev. 22 : 12–15, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work is." No one doubts that such is the object and result of Christ's coming; but as to proof that all men receive the reward of their works *together*, and that *immediately upon* the coming of Christ, the passage affords none. The same remark applies to Matt. 16 : 27. Doubtless it is at Christ's coming that the period commences in which He will "reward every man according to his works," and this the passage declares. But it declares nothing as to the order in which the rewards shall be distributed, and that is the question at issue.

Acts 17 : 31, assuredly testifies that God "hath appointed a day, *in the which* He will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained;" but it is a mere popular delusion, unsupported by Scripture and contradicted by it, to suppose that "the day" here spoken of is a day of twenty-four hours; and if it be allowed that the phrase expresses a lengthened, indefinite period, "in the which" the world is to be judged, it is impossible to prove by this, that all classes of mankind will be judged together.

It is sought to identify 2 Thess. 1 : 6–10, with Rev. 20 : 11–15, and to prove, from the alleged coincidence, that the final judgment of the righteous and the wicked, at one and the same time, is the subject of which both passages treat. But 2 Thess. 1 : 6–10 so plainly and simply sets forth a revelation of the Lord in person *to this very earth*, and *instantaneous* execution of fearful vengeance upon the ungodly persecutors of His people, *alive and in the flesh*, that it is astonishing how any should suppose it to set forth a judicious process at all. It is indeed an awful, solemn visitation of which 2 Thess. 1 treats; but it is not the slow solemnity of formal judgment, as in Rev. 20. *Here* the Lord is at once revealed in flaming fire; *there* there is no mention of fire till the judgment is over. *Here* it is bright consuming fire encircling the Lord; *there* it is the lake of fire. *Here* His appearing is for the instant destruction of His enemies, without any mention of trial at all; *there* it is to put them upon solemn trial before either sentence or punishment. *Here* there is not even an allusion to the dead; *there* there is as little allusion to the living; the only agreement between them being that in neither are the righteous said to be judged. 2 Thess. 1 represents the Lord Jesus as coming to take signal vengeance upon ungodly *living men*—the troublers of His people: it does not represent Him as coming to judge "at once" "all the human race"—the living and the dead—the righteous and the wicked. It speaks of *a* terrible

Digitized by Google

judgment *upon* wicked men, but not of *the* judgment *of* the whole human family. It does witness of the Lord's coming "to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe;" but that is surely not in their being arraigned along with the wicked, before one common tribunal, but in their being manifested with Him, at His coming, in that glory to which they will have previously been received.

The great argument, however, in support of a simultaneous judgment of all men at Christ's coming, is supposed to be derived from a comparison of Matt. 25 : 31–46, with Rev. 20 : 11–15. All being agreed that the judgment of the great white throne embraces all generations of men who have not been previously judged, and Matt. 25 : 31 – 46 confessedly treating of a judgment to take place at the coming of the Son of man, it is sought to identify these, and thus to show that both passages describe an absolutely universal and simultaneous judgment immediately ensuing on the coming of Christ. It requires, however, but a slight examination of the passages, to see that this argument is wholly without foundation. Neither passage describes an absolutely universal judgment; and so far from both passages describing the same scene, they have scarcely a circumstance or a feature in common with each other. The two scenes are entirely distinguished from each other, as to antecedent circumstances, time, sphere, subjects of judgment, and character of proceedings.

As to *antecedent circumstances and time*, it requires but a glance to perceive that neither passage can fairly be considered apart from the connection in which it stands. That in Matthew is the close of a connected discourse commencing with chapter 24; that in Revelation is part of an equally connected strain of prophecy, commencing with chapter 19, and extending to chapter 21 : 8. Our Lord's words, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory," are not the introduction of a subject then mentioned for the first time, but intended to shed further light upon an event which is the prominent subject of the whole discourse. Read Matt. 24 and 25, and say, if "the coming of the Son of man" be not the great, the main subject of the entire prophecy. The disciples hear of certain marks by which it was to be known that the end was not yet. They are next told of signs which would prove it to be at hand,—the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, and the time of unequalled tribulation also foretold by him. They are cautioned against the idea of Christ's having come, and of His being concealed in the desert or in the secret chambers; and He tells them, "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also *the coming of the Son of man* be." Here is the first occurrence in this discourse of this all-important phrase. We then read, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see *the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.*" We next read of His sending forth His angels to gather His elect from the four winds of heaven; *the coming of the Son of man* is compared to that of the flood in the days of Noah; and a variety of illustrations and parables are employed, the moral repeated at the close of each being—"Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein *the Son of man cometh.*" It is after all these references to the event, and in evident connection with them all, that our Lord says, "*When the Son of man shall come in His glory*, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory." That is, the scene which He thus begins to describe is one which will quickly ensue on that "coming of the Son of man" of which He had already so largely spoken. Now, in Rev. 20 : 11–15, *there is no mention of Christ's coming at all;* and for the best possible reason, namely, *that the context of the passage proves*

Digitized by Google

it to have taken place upwards of a thousand years before. Chapter 19 treats of the coming of the Son of man, while chapter 20 proceeds to unfold its results, the binding of Satan, and the reign of the risen saints with Christ for a thousand years. On the expiration of the thousand years, a little season ensues in which, Satan being loosed afresh, a rebellion takes place, and fire comes down from God out of heaven and destroys the wicked, while Satan, who deceived them, is cast into the lake of fire. Then it is that the final judgment takes place, the description of which is thus introduced—"And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them." Thus, as to *time* and *antecedent circumstances*, no two events could be more widely distinguished than the acts of judgment respectively portrayed in the passages before us.

Nor are they less distinct as to *sphere*. All the earlier part of our Lord's discourse in Matthew, as well as His quotations from the Prophet Daniel, associates "the coming of the Son of man" with Judea and Jerusalem; and the words, "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, He shall sit on the throne of His glory," necessarily carry the thoughts back to numerous Old Testament passages, which speak of *Jerusalem* as "the throne of the Lord," and of "all nations being gathered to the Lord, to *Jerusalem*." See especially Jer. 3: 17, 23: 5; Joel 3: 1, 2, 9–16; Isaiah 66. But in Rev. 20 the earth and the heaven have fled away from before the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne, before the judgment begins, or the books are opened.

As to the subjects of the judgment, Matt. 25 speaks only of *the living*—Rev. 20 only of *the dead*. "Before Him shall be gathered *all nations*," is the language of the one: "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God," is that of the other. Assiduous efforts are made to show that "all nations" includes the dead of all generations, and that "the dead, small and great," absolutely means all mankind. But the expression rendered "all nations," literally rendered, is "all the Gentiles." The word rendered "nations,"* with the article, occurs, if we mistake not, one hundred and thirty-two times in the New Testament. It is rendered "the Gentiles" ninety-two times—"the nations" ten times—"the heathen" five times—and simply "nations" twenty-five times only; but it is never, in any instance (unless it be this), applied either to the dead or the raised. The very expression indicates a present existence and locality upon earth. Nor is there any mention in the passage of "the opening of the graves," or "the sea giving up its dead," or any reference whatever to resurrection. It is the judgment of the Gentiles at the coming of Christ. Nor could anything be in more perfect keeping with the whole discourse. Chap. 24: 15–41, gives the judgment of Israel; 24: 42, to 25: 30, the judgment of Christendom; 25: 31–46, the judgment of the Gentiles.

Rev. 20: 11–15, is the judgment of "the dead," or what our Lord terms, in John 5: 29, "the resurrection of judgment." There is not a word in the passage of any but "the dead." "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God." "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." "The rest of the dead," who "lived not again, till the thousand years were finished," doubtless form the vast majority in this wondrous scene. Any who may in the course of the thousand years be cut off for sin, as well as the rebels of the little season which succeeds, will also be among the number. There are those who urge the expression "small and great" as at least so far expressive of universality as to indicate that all the dead, both righteous and wicked, will be included in this judgment. No argument could be more unfortunate. Where it is said in Rev. 11: 18, on the sounding of the seventh trumpet, that "thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto.....

* Τὰ ἔθνη

Digitized by Google

them that fear thy name, *small and great*," do the objectors themselves regard the phrase as including all of all ages who fear God's name? Of course they do not; for they are obliged to acknowledge that the whole Millennium succeeds the epoch to which these words refer. So in chapter 13: 16, are we to understand by "all, *both small and great*," that literally every person on the face of the globe will receive the mark of the beast in his right hand, or in his forehead? Or, again, in chapter 19: 18, does "the flesh of all men, both free and bond, *both small and great*," intimate that not one of the human race will survive the carnage? How, then, should these words in chapter 20: 12, prove that all the dead, of all generations, righteous as well as wicked, are to stand before the great white throne? All who are dead *when the throne is set*, will doubtless be raised to stand before it; but the righteous dead will have been raised more than a thousand years before; and as to the righteous during the Millennium, there is no scripture proof that they will die, but strong presumptive evidence to the contrary. In any case, to identify a passage which treats only of *the judgment of the dead*, with another which treats as exclusively of *a judgment on living nations*, death and resurrection not being mentioned in it at all, is a remarkable instance of confounding things which essentially differ, and affords but little support to the doctrine sought to be based thereon,—that of the simultaneous judgment of the whole human race at the coming of Christ.

With regard to the *character* of the judgment, the passages differ just as widely. That in Matt. 25 is not, strictly speaking, so much a trial by *a judge*, as a calling up for sentence, and an award of punishment or reward by a KING, to *rebellious* or *obedient* subjects. It is as KING that Christ speaks and acts; and His very first act, after taking His seat upon "the throne of His glory," is a division of the gathered ones into classes, in a way which supposes their previous guilt or innocence. His first words are the *sentence* of the righteous, which, as well as that subsequently pronounced on the wicked, assumes, without any process of trial or opening of books, the obedience or rebellion of the sentenced ones. How different from the judgment of the great white throne, where the books are opened, and another book, which is the book of life; the dead being judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. Could two scenes of judgment be well described in more dissimilar terms?

It has been supposed, from the mention made of "the book of life," that there must be some in the judgment of the great white throne, whose names are found there. But why this necessity? Without supposing this at all, there is most important meaning in this solemn act. "We need scarcely say, that previous to all investigation God knows that the names of the wicked are not there, even as without any trial He knows the character of their works. But according to His gracious dealings with men, none are *necessarily* condemned for evil works, pardon being offered to the guilty. For this reason, there are two solemn stages in this judgment,—first, a reference to the *other books*, to show that the works of the wicked deserve death; secondly, the opening of '*the book of life*,' to show that by unbelief they have rejected life. And then, their names not being there, the execution of the sentence follows,—which is 'the second death.'"

The last verse of Matt. 25 is sometimes urged as showing that the judgment cannot be at the commencement of the Millennium, but must be identical with that of the great white throne. But let the reader compare Isaiah 66: 24; Rev. 14: 10, 11; and 19: 20, which all confessedly refer to pre-millennial judgments, and the difficulty will vanish at once.

"THY KINGDOM COME."

BY T. GEORGE BELL, D.D.

THESE words sound forth from many thousand lips—alas! from far more lips than hearts. They stand connected in God's word with that sweetest of exclamations, "Our Father!" Vast assemblies of mere professors repeat them. Hundreds chant, to the peal of the organ, the

Digitized by Google

words, "*Thy kingdom come.*" Where the heart is not right with God, mere words cannot please Him. Perhaps amid the sound one whisper of faith ascends; it has come from some heart filled with love to Jesus; it is the whisper of a babe in Christ, "*Thy kingdom come.*"

This is prayer; it is the voice of the child which enters the ear of THE FATHER.

What a contrast between this accepted voice and the lip-service of the ignorant multitude of formalists!

Whose kingdom is it for which we pray? Is it the kingdom of God as Creator?

That kingdom has come, has always been since He spoke the world into being. Man's sin and rebellion did not, and could not, shake the throne of the Almighty, or alter His right to possess the thing which He had made. Is it the kingdom of God as supreme Governor and Director of all things? That kingdom has also come—could never cease to be. There have been men so foolish as to declare that God, having made the world and put man into it, left it to manage all its own affairs by the power of certain fixed principle which He put into it. Others, equally deceived, have said that when man brought sin into the world God turned His back upon it, and, seated in some far-off glory, left man to work out his own evil designs. The word of God, and the daily experience of every enlightened man, declares the very opposite of all this. God exercises an all-pervading providence. There is no such thing as *chance* in the world. God's omniscient eye ranges through the universe—takes it all up in a glance, yet watches the very sparrow falling to the ground.

The words, "*Our Father*" give us the key to the meaning of the prayer, "*Thy kingdom come.*" It is not *the creature's* prayer for the kingdom of *the Creator*, but *the child's* prayer for the kingdom of *the Father*. Still more correctly, it is the prayer of *the disciple* of the Lord Jesus for the kingdom of his *one Master and Lord*. The children of God are *a new family*, made up of individuals *separated* from the race of Adam. No outward rite avails anything, or any profession, neither work of human hands nor device of human hearts. It is a "new creation." The children are *born of God*, even by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. Consequently they are a new race, being brought into union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Man's religion never comes up to this. He cannot understand *relationship to God*. He only, as the creature, attempts to appease the Creator. It is only the man who has been BORN AGAIN who can cry, "*My Father, God!*" Vital Christianity is founded upon God's own revelation. This is a declaration of sovereign, distinguishing grace, calling out a family, and giving to each member of it a new life, quickening him—who had been up to that moment dead—into the risen life of the living Christ at God's right hand. Christ is the head of the family; it is by Him that the family is gathered together, through Him we receive the adoption of sons—we are joint-heirs with Him—His kingdom is ours, and we shall possess it with Him when He takes it to reign. The Father has given all power and dominion to the Son, and the petition we are considering is the cry of the joint-heir who longs to enter upon the possession of his inheritance.

Much that is written and spoken in these days about the universal fatherhood of God is most delusive, for it smooths down, in the deceived heart, the barrier which sin has made between the Holy God and the fallen, degenerate, and guilty human family. We must meet God in Christ before we can call Him "*Our Father*," and we must be thus *heirs of the kingdom* before we can truly desire that kingdom to come.

The prayer is in itself a proof that the kingdom has not come yet. Christ has *the right* to reign, and, in a certain sense, He is reigning, having now all power both in heaven and earth; but in another and most important sense He is not reigning, for He has not yet manifestly taken to Himself the throne. He sits upon the Father's throne, according to that we read, "*Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*" The prophecy of Daniel remains yet to be accomplished: "*The Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people,*

Digitized by Google

nations, and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that shall not be destroyed." The fulfilment of that Scripture will be also the accomplishment of another Revelation: "*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever.*"

We may think of the kingdom under two aspects; its internal and spiritual development, and its external and complete manifestation. The first is now in process of accomplishment by the power of the Holy Spirit; the latter will be hereafter accomplished by the presence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. Jesus once said, "My kingdom is not of this world." He evidently meant to declare that the power to establish it was not earthly. By no human power or worldly influence was it to be set up. If He had meant that His kingdom would never be set up in this world, He would have been contradicting many Scriptures. This He could never do.

The two aspects of the kingdom are—I. INTERNAL OR SPIRITUAL. "*The kingdom of God is not meat and drink,*" that is, mere external observances or works, *but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* This is the experience of the individual. Every sinner brought, through the *new birth* into the *new creation* in Christ Jesus, makes a part of the kingdom. Every fresh step taken by a child of God in the way of obedience, of self-denial, of holiness in conformity to the example of Christ, adds strength to the kingdom. May God lead us into self-judgment, for we often cry, "*Thy kingdom come,*" whilst in the actions of our lives we are showing great indifference to its progress.

II. OUTWARD MANIFESTATIONS. This is at the *appearing* of the Lord Jesus Christ. He comes *a second time without sin unto salvation.* He comes for the full deliverance of his whole Church out of the tribulations of a Christ-rejecting age, and for their establishment with Himself in that kingdom for which we pray. A Scripture in Luke 17 is sometimes brought against our views of the outward manifestation of the kingdom: "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.*" The Lord certainly declares that His kingdom was not to come *at that time* with observation, but He as plainly points forward to another time when it should so come, for He says: "*As the lightning that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, so shall the Son of Man be in His day.*" The lightning is visible and manifest to all, "so shall also the Son of Man be in *His day.*" The present age is not the Son of Man's day. He is rejected. The world has cast Him out. This is *man's day.* Man's day ends with the world's midnight. That will be in terror and dismay; men's hearts failing them for fear in looking on the things which are coming on the earth. Christ's day will then begin. For its dawning thousands are looking. Yes! though in God's sight the world is dead and the Church may be asleep, yet thousands of God's believing people are awakening to the solemn import of the times, and are waiting for their Lord from heaven. Thus, better far than the ignorant cry of the mere professing multitude, there is rising up, continually, the true prayer of many an earnest heart—"THY KINGDOM COME."

TILL HE COME.

BY REV. E. H. BICKERSTETH.

"TILL he come"—oh! let the words
Linger on the trembling chords;
Let the little while between
In their golden light be seen;
Let us think how heaven and home
Lie beyond that "till He come."

When the weary ones we love
Enter on their rest above,
Seems the earth so poor and vast,
All our life-joy overcast?
Hush! be every murmur dumb!
It is only "till He come."

Clouds and conflicts 'round us press;
Would we have one sorrow less?
All the sharpness of the cross,
All that tells the world is loss,
Death, and darkness, and the tomb,
Only whisper, "till He come."

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

TALK WITH OUR READERS ABOUT COMMON THINGS.

DEMONISM *alias* SPIRITUALISM.

No. 6.

THE Holy Spirit speaketh expressly concerning the seducing spirits of the last times, that they shall *forbid to marry*. This is a singular characteristic, and, therefore, the more striking. No impostor could possibly have invented it.

In the minor or foreshadowing fulfilment of this prophecy, in the year-day fulfilment, we find it prominent in the Popish system; in which, however, it is restricted to the celibacy of the priesthood. In the teachings of Spiritualism, it becomes universal. The spirits, through the mediums, *endeavor to overthrow the whole marriage institution, on which society rests*, and without the sanctions of which the whole world would become a chaos and the race soon die out. The demons say the marriage relation is merely a private compact, an arrangement for mutual convenience, just like any other *bargain of civil life*, and that a *superstitious* sanctity has been thrown around it which holds the race in thraldom.

They point to numerous unhappy marriages, and pretend that they, the demons, offer the true remedy by proposing their "spiritual affinities." There must be, say they, in all cases of true marriage, a mental correspondence, a harmony of views, tastes, feelings, and character. At present, indeed, these "affinities" are pretended to be in the highest degree Platonic. They also say that a true marriage is eternal, and they give numerous instances of marriage after death, in contradiction to our Lord's declaration in Luke 20 : 35.

But what is the practical working of this demon doctrine? Nothing less than that every one should be at liberty to follow his own inclination, that is, his own *lusts*. The spirits teach "free love," and the mediums very often practically carry it out, of which notorious instances could be given. This feature of dislike to marriage is another of the *prominent* traits in the teachings of Spiritualism; it comes in on all occasions. Hatred to Christ and the Bible, hypocritical praise of virtue, constant exhortations to intercourse with demons in "circles" and elsewhere, and inculcation of "free love," hold equal and prominent places in the demon scheme, and the books and "revelations" given in its favor. Nor is it hard to persuade fallen human nature to break the bonds which restrain its corrupt inclinations, more especially when the fear of the consequences is taken away by lies concerning the superior happiness of *all* in the *disembodied* state. The Spiritualist newspapers and books declare that nothing less than a complete upheaval and "regeneration" of society awaits us, and they freely admit that it must be preceded by a great struggle and much suffering, thus uttering, albeit unconsciously, a Caiaphas prediction. And when the way has been prepared by the teachings of "reason," what lever so effectual in toppling over the old fabric as the abrogation of marriage? It is true the spirits avoid the issue by highsounding lies in hypocrisy; but it is quite plain to all those who are not yet given over to strong delusion to believe a lie. Let every one reflect for himself on the consequences; we shall not take up room with them. It is not necessary. They are palpable to the most unreflecting mind. The whole world would be a brothel; domestic love would be unknown, and the tender offspring would die of moral and physical destitution. The most horrible crimes of every sort would be perpetrated in connection with it; and all under the name of refinement and liberty! Truly, here we find the genuine dragon-speech, which no cloaking can altogether conceal.

Is not this the "fornication" pointed out in Rev. 9 : 21 as one of the five monster sins of Antichrist's three and a half years? Let those who are disposed to think such a view improbable, reflect that even in the present incipient stage and partial development of Spiritualism, it has already carried away a multitude of apostates from the Christian faith, and lured thousands of votaries into the dens of licentiousness. How could it be otherwise, so long as

Digitized by Google

effect follows cause? Contemplate its millions of followers, and see whether the majority of them were not once members of Christian churches, or attendants on Divine worship. And—alas that we should have to say it!—many hypocritically still keep up their church connections, and some even pass for consistent members.

A Spiritualist publication (*Light from the Spirit World*) contains the following: "The marriage institution of man is wrong, and must be annulled ere the race is redeemed." T. L. Harris says: "Spirits declare that there is no marriage as a natural law, but that polygamy or bigamy is as orderly as the monogamic tie. A new *attraction* becomes the lawful husband or the lawful wife. The marriage vow imposes no obligations in the views of 'Spiritualists.' Husbands who had for years been so devotedly attached to their wives, that they have said nothing in the world but death itself could part them, have abandoned their wives and formed criminal connections with other females, because the spirits had told them that there was a greater Spiritualist affinity between these husbands and certain other women, than between them and their lawful wives. Wives too, the most devoted and loving, and true to their husbands, that had ever contracted the marriage obligation, had left their husbands and children, and lived in open immorality with other men, because the spirits had told them that they ought to do so, on the ground of there being a greater spiritualist sympathy between them and these men than between them and their husbands."

We may venture to remark that in "forbidding to marry," it is possible that the spirits may have ulterior reasons apart from their enmity to *man*, for they are far more familiar than we can be with all the issues of their grand contest with Christ. They know and believe all the truths of the Bible themselves, although they *teach* lies in hypocrisy. (James 2: 19.) Man is but a tool to employ, to vent their hate against the Most High. We need only hint at the great mystery of the Marriage of the Lamb, of which the first transaction in Eden was a type, in the bride whom God presented to Adam. The two are to be one flesh. (Eph. 5: 30, 32.)

Let not the Christian public suppose that these "Spiritualist" invectives against the marriage institution are the empty rantings of crack-brained fanatics, such as have *always* been in the world, and so pass them over as unworthy of notice on account of their insignificance. Let it not be said that the most sacred names and institutions have always found defamers and perverters. This is true; but Spiritualism is not to be confounded with them, and stands out in bold relief as the quintessence of all these wickednesses. And it has already leavened the whole of society in the most insidious manner, numbering amongst its votaries, and open or secret defenders, names that are prominent in the land. It is also well known that a powerful party at nearly every court of Christendom, if not the court itself, is attached to it, and we might relate facts to show that very many of our leading Congressmen have become its followers. Even such a man as Rev. John Pierpont has lectured with approval in its defence, and has indorsed and recommended it *in the halls of Congress*. And now it takes its place in public lectures, alongside of temperance. We readily admit that a few of its adherents may be good, but mistaken men; this is because they are seduced by its hypocritical pretensions, but ignorant of its real character, and know not what a serpent they are warming into life in their bosoms. The mischief done, however, remains the same, or rather becomes worse on that account. Even now the most shameless licentiousness is secretly and openly carried on and defended under the name of "*free love*." And when such cases end in ruin, shame, despair, and death, as they sometimes do, others are ready to plead that it is only "because the noble and spiritual tenets have been abused and misunderstood." May God preserve us from fellowship with demons or their teachings, even though they should speak with angel tongues! It may seem incredible to some that Spiritualism should hold forth such abominations, but a little inquiry will satisfy them that "free love" is as yet only in its incipient form, and is advancing with stealthy, cat-like tread.

—

Digitized by Google

A FRIEND writes the following: "Forbidding to marry." This is so clearly a mark of modern Spiritualists, that the marriage institution is the subject of every vituperative epithet on their part. And there is even talk among them of getting up petitions to the legislatures for its establishment by law. The shameless manner in which they break their marriage bonds, and take spiritual wives, is said by them to be at the express command of the spirits. Some, who have been remarkable for their moral and correct lives previous to their commerce with Spiritualism, have, by thinking that they must obey the spirits, been induced to leave wives and children that they loved much better than the spiritual wife that they were commanded to take; and were affected to tears when they spoke of those they had left, and of the sacrifice they had to make in doing so; but thought it the greater virtue that they did so in obedience to the spirits. There was a case of this kind which occurred here some time ago. A young man, of upright, moral character, left a young wife and family of children, for a woman of abandoned character, whom the spirits commanded him to take. He wept every time he spoke of his family, and said he loved them very much better than the woman the spirits had commanded him to take, but that he must obey the spirits.

NAPOLEON'S SUPREMACY.

COINCIDENT with the views which we have ventured to express, along with other students of Prophecy and observers of the signs of the times, concerning the present Emperor of France, and the part he seems likely to play in the future, we clip the following from the *Gazette* of Berlin. It is written by one who comprehends what he says:

"Since Napoleon III has been on the throne of France, there has not been any period which has reflected so much glory on him as the present. After the capture of Sebastopol the star of Napoleon was most brilliant; but he there had by his side England, which, to a certain extent, shared in his glory. The battle of Solferino was followed by the peace of Villafranca and by the Treaty of Zurich; but Napoleon was obliged to sacrifice a part of his promise: 'free as far as the Adriatic.' The taking of Puebla and of Mexico has contributed much to his transatlantic eclat. Nevertheless, that picture presented more than one dark shade; and, to sum up, the conqueror was happy to cede the prize of his victory to the House of Austria. But what surpasses all those glorious feats for the Emperor of the French, is the present period, in which France has done nothing, and, nevertheless, directs all the Cabinets of Europe according to her will, and in conformity with her intentions. It would be a fault not to admit the fact; it may be painful to say it, but such is the truth. Let us therefore openly avow the fact that France, tranquil as she is, is so predominant with all the Cabinets that she manifests her influence over Europe in a more evident manner than all that has hitherto happened. To attempt to close the eyes to that truth is to risk disregarding the consequences of such neglect."

We make another extract to the same effect from an English paper, "*John Bull*."

"The position of France is necessarily of itself a matter of European interest; but over and above this we have all a share in the French Emperor. He it is who, more than any other man at the present time, 'disposes of peace and war in his own majestic way.' He it is who more than any other has a vast controlling power over the happiness and prosperity of his kind. To every man, whose business it is to forecast the future of public affairs, to speculate on the way in which they will affect himself, his children, or his money, it is of primary importance to know what Napoleon III is going to do. That Paris should be the Abel of the civilized world—the place where 'they shall surely ask counsel, and so end the matter'—and that France should, beside, be potent enough to enforce the acceptance of her counsels, if need be,—this is a thing of which Frenchmen are rightfully proud. Napoleon is wiser than Democratic energy, bolder and more inventive than Parliamentary statesmanship."

We notice, also, in many of the prominent political essays now issuing from the English press, a distinct avowal, that the security of England at this moment depends upon the will of the French Emperor. A number of British statesmen show their acceptance of him as the only saviour of British institutions, and to this end are writing to induce a conciliatory spirit and close alliance on the part of the British government and people towards France and her Emperor. Are not things wonderfully maturing towards the consummation of which we have tried to notify our readers?

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. APRIL, 1865. No. 4.

Special Contributions.

THE DESTINY OF OUR EARTH AND RACE.

ANOTHER passage of Scripture, very clear and conclusive in its teaching on the subject now before us, is Daniel 7 : 13, 14, and 27. This seventh chapter of Daniel is one of the most remarkable portions of God's blessed word. It is remarkable for many things. Chief among these are its clearness, its continuity, and its comprehensiveness. Other prophecies throw light on particular points or objects, that lie far off from us, in the distance of the coming future. But here we have a sort of continuous prophetical history of the future. It is a complete chart of prophecy. It lights up at once, not here a point and there a point, but the whole horizon of the future. It takes up the thread of the history of our race at the time when Daniel lived; and, in the successive developments of the four great universal monarchies, which were to occupy and fill the earth, it runs on with the thread of that history through all the ages that were to intervene till Jesus shall come again. It carries that history through the fearful scenes of the final judgment, and then launches out with it into the broad ocean of its final and eternal state. And where the curtain drops upon the scene, as here set before us, the glory of eternity is shining on that scene, and in the light which is thus bathing it, we see clearly revealed "*the destiny of our earth and race.*" The earth, restored, has started on its final course of everlasting blessedness; and the race, purified and recovered from the power of the curse, is possessing that earth, and peopling it with successive generations of *nations*, differing from each other, and preserving their distinctive peculiarities.

And there are *three* things especially deserving our attention, in the prophecy now before us. *The first of these is the time to which it refers.*

It is clearly *post-resurrection*. It describes a state of things that can be realized only after the second coming of Christ has taken place.

This is manifest from the language used in v. 13: "*I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven.*" Compare this language with that in which our Saviour distinctly foretells His second coming, and the identity of the two descriptions becomes apparent. In Matt. 24 : 30, we read, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall *see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven* with power and great glory."

In Matth. 26 : 64, we read: "Hereafter shall ye *see the Son of man* sitting on the right hand of power, and *coming in the clouds of heaven.*" The language in both these passages is so identical with that which the prophet uses that it seems impossible to resist the conclusion that it must have the same meaning in Daniel and in Matthew. Daniel, indeed, speaks of "one *like* the Son of man;" but it is evident that this is only a figure of speech to denote the Son of man himself. And if you admit that the *person* referred to by the prophet and the Evangelist is one and the same, then you must admit that the *time* contemplated in these several passages is the same, also. And as no

Digitized by Google

one can doubt that the time of which our Saviour speaks, in the passages quoted from St. Matthew, is post-resurrection, or the time of His second coming, the conclusion follows, inevitably, that the time of which Daniel speaks, in the passage we are considering, must be post-resurrection also, or time connected with the second coming of Christ into our world. And this makes clear our first point, which is *the time* referred to in this prophecy of Daniel.

The second important point to be noticed in connection with this prophecy, is the nature of the kingdom here described.

And so far as regards the bearing of this prophecy on our present subject, there is but a single point which it is important for us now to consider, and that is, *who are the subjects* of the kingdom here referred to. In the 27th verse, of this 7th chapter of Daniel, it is spoken of as a kingdom which "*all dominions*" shall serve and obey. If this were all that was said about it, it would have been very difficult to throw much light on the particular point now before us. We should hardly have been able to affirm anything very clearly or definitely about it. But this is not all that is said about the subjects of this kingdom promised to "the Son of man," and to "the saints of the Most High," who are his resurrection people. In the 14th verse, of this chapter, we have a much fuller designation given of the subjects of this kingdom. There we read, that "there was given Him," *i. e.* "the Son of man," "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that *all people, nations,* and *languages,* should serve Him." This cannot refer to the people whom Christ is now gathering to Himself out of all lands. These, when Christ shall come again, will be in their resurrection state. They will constitute "the Church of the first-born." They will be "the saints of the Most High," spoken of in v. 27. With them "death will be swallowed up in victory;" "the corruptible will have put on incorruption;" "the mortal will have put on immortality." In that blessed state, to which they will then have attained, there will be found existing "neither Jew nor Gentile, neither male nor female." They will all be "made one with Christ." They will be "made perfect in Christ Jesus." With them all national distinction will be forever done away. The expressions, "people, nations, and languages," will not apply to them. It is clear, then, that *they* must all be set aside. It cannot be "the children of the resurrection," then, who are the subjects of this kingdom. And yet, clearly, it is the earth on which we dwell that is to be the theatre of this kingdom. For it is "*under the whole heaven*" (v. 27) that this kingdom is established. And it is "all *people, nations,* and *languages,*" who are to be the subjects of this kingdom. The question then presses upon us, who are we to understand as referred to, by this language? We are shut up to one answer. It is the purified stock of our race, recovered from the curse, with the taint and pollution of original sin purged away, made perfect, indeed, but still not partakers of the resurrection, and who, with their distinctions yet remaining, will possess and people the earth through successive generations, forever. These "people, nations, and languages," answer to "*the nations of them that are saved,*" of whom St. John speaks as "walking in the light" of that glorious city of the skies, which is to be revealed when "the new heavens and the new earth" are made. Thus, then, we have clear light on our second point. We see *who are the subjects* of this promised kingdom, and so are able to judge as to what the nature of that kingdom will be.

The other point to be noticed, in the prophecy before us, has to do with the duration of this kingdom.

Various expressions are made use of in this prophecy in reference to this duration. In verse 14, it is said, of "the Son of man," that "his dominion is an *everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away,* and *his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*"

In verse 27, it is again said, of this kingdom, that it shall be "*an everlasting kingdom.*" And in verse 18, it is declared, still more emphatically, that "the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess *the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.*" Nothing could be more decided than this. It denotes unending duration in the most absolute and unqualified sense. The terms "everlasting" and "for-

Digitized by Google

ever" are sometimes used in a limited sense. Thus, if we speak of a man doing a particular thing "everlastingly," or forever, the terms are limited by the measure of the man's life. The meaning is, that he would do it *as long as he lived*. And so, when it was said of any of the requirements of the ceremonial service, established by Moses, that it was to be "observed by the people in their generations *forever*," the meaning of the term "forever" then was, while that ritual service lasted. The measure or degree of duration denoted by the terms "forever" and "everlasting," is determined by the nature of the things to which they are applied. If they refer to a man, a tree, or a nation, then the measure of the duration will be the life of the man, or the existence of the tree or the nation. But we have seen that the kingdom of which Daniel here speaks is connected with "the new heavens and the new earth," or the state of things that is to follow after the resurrection shall have taken place. But we know that *that* is a state of things which will never pass away. It will be, in the most absolute and unlimited sense, perpetual, or eternal. And if this be so, then the terms "everlasting" and "forever, even forever and ever," here applied to the promised kingdom, must be taken in their broadest, fullest, and most unqualified meaning. They denote a kingdom which will last through eternity. And if the kingdom here described is to be thus enduring, then it follows, irresistibly, that the earth, which is the theatre of that kingdom, must be equally enduring; and "the people, nations, and languages" who are to be the subjects of that kingdom, must run on in successive generations, through the same period of unending duration. And thus the prophecy contained in this 7th chapter of Daniel solves, satisfactorily, the great problem of "*The Destiny of our Earth and Race.*" R. N.

JEW AND GENTILE.

The ancient Jewish nation is often held up by Christians in condemnation, on account of their ungodliness and idolatry. And rightly so. The Israelites were especially favored by the Almighty. He took their great progenitor, Abraham, from among the heathen, and promised to make him a great nation, and to bestow upon his descendants large possessions. He watched over his children with peculiar care. He delivered them from a cruel bondage to which they had been subjected, and visited upon their enemies dire calamities. He raised up for them great and good leaders to go before them, who were immediately under his direction. He even manifested his presence among them in a visible manner; first by the pillar of cloud and of fire, and afterwards by the shekinah in the Holy of Holies. He placed them in a goodly land, and gave them a goodly heritage. He proclaimed his law to them. He sent them prophets, who, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, made known His will to them. He instituted an order of Divine worship, the object of which was to keep in their minds a knowledge of Himself, and to lead them to look forward to the Messiah, who had been promised as their Saviour and Lord. Everything that was necessary to preserve them in the true faith and in the true worship was done. But, notwithstanding all this, they rebelled against Him, and fell into the idolatry and corruption of the nations that surrounded them. They neglected the laws which were enjoined upon them. They turned a deaf ear to the voice of God's prophets, heeding neither their invitations nor their threatenings. They defiled the temple, concerning which God had said that He would place His name there. They made for themselves groves, in which heathen rites were practised. They built altars and carved out idols, and sacrificed to them; and so turned away from the God who had been so gracious to them. Time and again they were punished for their idolatry and sins. Sometimes these punishments had the effect of leading them to repentance. But as often as they repented they relapsed again into their former evil ways. And though God was long-suffering, and spared them, and cherished them, and finally sent His own Son to them, saying, "They will reverence my Son," yet they filled up the cup of their iniquity by exclaiming, "This is the heir, come let us kill him," and actually putting the Prince of Peace to the

Digitized by Google

death of the cross. When we review their history, count over the mercies and favors which heaven continually showered upon them, and then look at the long array of deep, dark sins, we are led to exclaim, What baseness! what ingratitude! Well did they deserve the heavy strokes with which they have been visited! God has been just in meting out to them the sore afflictions under which they have been suffering.

But when we come to look at the past and present state of Christendom, can we say that the Gentiles have treated the revelations of God better than the Jews did? Considering the increased means of grace bestowed upon us, our greater facilities for acquiring Divine truth, have we made any better use of our privileges and advantages than they did? Have we advanced more in religious life? Have we more zeal for God? Are we more desirous of promoting God's glory? Are the various ranks of society more generally and more deeply pervaded with the principles of holiness? Do we manifest more of a spirit of consecration to God? Is there more reverence for holy things among the masses? More spirituality among professing Christians? When we look at the ungodliness so prevalent in society, and at the worldliness so common among Christians, we are compelled to say that we believe the Gentile has treated all the gracious movements of God towards him very little better than the Jew did. In those countries which are called Christian, how is the name of God dishonored and blasphemed? How are the principles of our holy religion banished from our national councils as out of place there? Look at the wickedness and iniquity which flourishes in high places. What respect is there for the commands of God among rulers, and princes, and statesmen, and diplomatists? What frauds are constantly perpetrated upon the community by the nation's representatives! What flagrant crimes are committed with unblushing effrontery by those occupying places of honor and trust! And among the learned, the teachers of philosophy, the teachers of law, the teachers of the arts and sciences, how much infidelity is there! Though there may be among many of them a confession by the lips of their belief in a Supreme Being, yet they practically ignore that belief by living in open rebellion against Him. In society in general, what pride, and vanity, and haughtiness, and selfishness, are manifested on the part of the rich; and what baseness, and trickery, and low cunning in the lower orders! What pleasure-seeking and riotous living are indulged in by all classes! How is the Lord's day disregarded and broken, and counted as a day of sensual indulgence and gratification! What greater idolatry was manifested among the ancient Jews than is found among many dwelling in civilized Christian lands? For, what difference is there between making an idol out of wood or stone, and bowing down and worshipping it, and making one out of gold, and devoting body and soul to its service? Out of the millions inhabiting lands in which the Gospel has been preached, how few are the professed followers of Jesus! And when we turn to look at the state of the Christian Church, the aspect is almost equally humiliating. Out of the numbers that have taken upon themselves the vows of Christianity, how many in any congregation can we say are really consecrated to the Lord, and are endeavoring, in lowliness and humility, to serve Him in sincerity and truth? Very few. What worldliness has crept into the Churches! See the false charity, the ostentatious benevolence, the fashion, the discord and wrangling, the hypocrisy, the hollow-hearted professions, the form of godliness without the power thereof, so prevalent in the Churches! A large proportion of church members are endeavoring to be wiser than their Master, in trying to do what He pronounced impossible, "Serve God and mammon;" and end in devoting themselves very little to God, and a great deal to mammon. And the Scriptures inform us that things shall grow worse, even than they are now. In 2 Tim. 3:1–5, we are told "That in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady,

Digitized by Google

highminded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof."

With these facts before us, can we say that the Gentile development has been any better than the Jewish? And yet there are some who tell us that, by the forces which are now in the world, by the faithful and diligent use of the means of grace which we now possess, by the continuance of efforts now being made, good shall progress, and evil shall be put down, and a better and happier state of things will be developed, which will finally eventuate in a millennium of righteousness and peace. Alas! that men should so deceive themselves, and blind their eyes to the truth. The Apostle Paul tells us that "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." How, then, can we look forward, so long as this present state of things continues, to a change so great as to bring about the conversion of the world, and the submission of all men to the gentle dominion and sway of the Lord Jesus Christ? We cannot expect it. Nay, God's word informs us that there shall be a more fearful apostasy yet; that evil shall grow until the harvest; that the world shall become worse, instead of better; that the Church shall always be depressed and persecuted until the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled; that there shall be even more direct and violent opposition against the Lord of heaven and earth; that the people shall rage, and the princes take counsel together against the Lord and against His Anointed. A race of evil men will arise, like those Jews who surrounded Pilate's judgment hall, ready to join with them, with heart and voice, in the cry, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!!" There is no hope for the world, then, and for the cause of truth and righteousness, so long as the present evil powers continue. Satan is the god of this world, and he will not readily give up his dominion. The only hope for both Jew and Gentile is in the coming of earth's rightful King, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is only under His administration that all confederates in iniquity will be subdued, and the righteous exalted. There is no prospect of peace and happiness for this sin-stricken and sorrow-laden earth until He shall come. Then, when He comes, under the new order of affairs which He will introduce, the curse under which this earth has been groaning for nearly six thousand years shall be lifted off, the desert shall bloom and blossom as the rose, and the world's inhabitants be restored to that state of innocence and bliss which our first parents enjoyed in Eden. We hail, then, the day of His coming as the day of our deliverance—the day of our redemption. We look to Him as our only Saviour; and we join with the devout prophet in the exclamation, "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will come and save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

Selections.

THE DUTY OF WATCHFULNESS.

(From "The Parable of the Ten Virgins." By Joseph A. Seiss, D.D.)

"Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."—MATT. 25 : 13.

IT is remarkable how full and pointed the Scriptures are in holding forth and impressing this particular duty. The Saviour enjoins it over and over, with the utmost solemnity and urgency. "Watch," says he, "for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." "Know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." Then comes this awakening parable to enforce these admonitions, to which it is added, "Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." In Mark, again, he says, "Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know

Digitized by Google

not when the time is. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13 : 33–37.) So, again, in Luke, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching." (Luke 12 : 35–37.) And, again, "Take heed to yourselves, lest that day come upon you unawares; for as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke 21 : 34–36.) So, also, writes St. Paul, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: ye are all the children of the light, and of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." (1 Thess. 5 : 4–6.) And again, in the Revelation of John, the Saviour shouts back, even from heaven, saying, "Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." (Rev. 16 : 15.)

A duty so repeatedly and earnestly enjoined, must be of the very highest importance and of the very deepest necessity. It becomes us, therefore, to look at it with seriousness, and to give to it our devout consideration.

Let us look, *first*, at the object with reference to which this watchfulness is to be exercised. That object is, *the coming of the Son of man.* The clause of the text which speaks of this has, indeed, been rejected by some as an interpolation. It is not found in the Vulgate, Syriac, Arabic, Persic, and Ethiopic versions. It is also wanting in three of Beza's copies. But nearly all the Greek copies contain it,—also Munster's Hebrew Gospel. But, whether it belongs to the original or not, it is very plainly implied. The watching enjoined has no other object expressed, and none other can be gathered from its surroundings. The subject of the parable is pre-eminently that of the coming of the Son of man, as it is also that of the whole chapter, of that which precedes it, and of the Church's hope. The watching inculcated is specifically urged as a practical deduction from the parable and the general subject of discourse. And the whole connection is broken by any other interpretation than that which is contained in the received reading. I, therefore, take the text as it stands, and shall so insist on it; and the more confidently, as the numerous parallel passages, to which I have referred, all specifically designate the second coming of the Son of man as the object towards which this watching is to be directed.

It has come to be the fashion in modern Christianity to adopt a very different strain of exhortation on this subject. It is seldom that preachers are heard urging on their people to watch for the coming of the Son of man. Death is the event to which men are referred, in connection with these passages, as to all intents and purposes the coming of Christ, at least to the individual. And there are some points in which the two concur. It is where death leaves a man, that the coming of the Saviour will find him. Nor is it unscriptural, in general discourse, to overleap the interval altogether, and to ply the conscience with the admonitions of the Gospel the same as if the moment of death brought with it all the great transactions of the last day. But it is a mistake, and one fraught with much practical mischief, to treat of death as if that were the thing to be looked to, and of which to interpret the many solemn injunctions of Scripture with reference to the coming again of Christ. It is proper enough to swallow up death in the scenes of the great day; but it is wholly unwarrantable to allow the scenes of that day to be swallowed up in our contemplations of death. Death, whether in itself or in its immediate consequences, is altogether a

Digitized by Google

different thing from the coming of Christ. Nor is it at all fitted to take the place in our thoughts and exhortations, which belongs to the coming of the Son of man. It has less attractiveness; it is weaker in practical impressiveness; and it presents a narrower, darker, more legal, and less evangelical circle of ideas. And to put it forward in our contemplations, instead of the prospect of the personal coming of the Lord Jesus, is to put a gloss upon the Scriptures which they were never intended to wear, to foist our judgment into the place of Divine wisdom, and to destroy one of the most beautiful collocations of sacred truth.

It is not enough, my friends, that we embrace all the doctrines of Christianity in our creed. We must, at the same time, receive them in their proper order and revealed connections. We cannot take the precepts and representations, which are given in connection with the coming of Christ, and apply them all to death, and then say that we believe in the coming of the Son of man, as the Scriptures present that doctrine. Proper submission to the authority of revelation requires us to receive its teachings in the connections in which God's word places them. And when we are told to watch for the coming of the Son of man, to apply the exhortation to death, and, at the same time, to put away the subject of the personal advent among articles of no direct practical concern, is to put asunder what God hath joined together, and to undertake to adjust the relations of Divine truth in a way which he has not authorized.

So far from making death the great terminus, the generalizations under which the Gospel views things quite overlook it. Starting with the first advent, the prospect stretches uninterruptedly onward to the second. The Christian Church is contemplated as one, unmutilated, ever-continuing, until Christ himself comes, and grace ends in glory. Death is not known in the case, and never once appears upon the whole length of the way, except as, here and there, a shadow, which hinders nothing, and to which no attention is paid. Looking at some of the most vigorous and precious passages in which we find the whole course of Christianity surveyed, it would be impossible to learn from them alone that death had any existence. Take this from Hebrews: "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin, unto salvation." Death and judgment are referred to in immediate proximity with these words, but only in connection with the course of sin; whilst the course of the Christian is made to reach back to Christ on the cross, in which it takes its rise, and forward to his coming again in the glory of the Father, in which it reaches its goal, with nothing coming between but the life of faith and hope. Take, also, this, from the Epistle to Titus: "The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, *even* the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Here, again, death is quite ignored, and the present world is made to touch directly upon the scenes of the appearing again of Christ, as the great and only event to which the Christian looks, next after his apprehension of Jesus as his Saviour. Two *appearings* are spoken of,—the one looked back to as *bringing* salvation, the other directly anticipated, as the completion of it. The one is *grace*, the other *glory*. By conforming to the proposals brought to us in the first, we hopefully await the second. And between these two, Christian life is sustained, with nothing more to separate it from the object of its anticipations in the future, than from the object of its faith in the past. It is, therefore, a sad disjointing of the scriptural adjustments of sacred truth, and an attempt to construct and sustain Christian life upon foundations and supports somewhat other than those appointed, to thrust death in as one of the great themes of evangelical incentive, or as a prominent subject in evangelical contemplations of the future. Death belongs to sin and the curse, not to the Gospel and salvation; and no one can substitute it, in any respect or degree, for "that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,"

Digitized by Google

without damage to true evangelism, and great weakening in the motive-powers of Christian piety.

And, for this very reason, preaching about death, which is usually accepted as the most pathetic, is generally the most ineffective and useless of all. It is a dislocation of the Divine order. It inserts into the Gospel a point of appeal different from that which it contains. And on the side of the future it gives to Christianity an artificial contrivance on which to go, in place of the elastic and powerful limb of living bone and muscle given it of God.*

When the Apostles undertook to stir up the consciences and activities of men, it was not to death and its certainty that they referred them, but to the prospect of the speedy coming of the Son of man in the glory of the Father, clothed with the majesty of His judicial power. Did they command men to repent? It was "because God had appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts 17 : 30, 31.) Would they have us devoted in building ourselves up in Christian holiness and virtue? It is "that when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." (1 John 2 : 18.) Did they wish to comfort those in persecutions and afflictions? They did not point them to the grave for rest, but said, "Be patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." (James 5 : 8.) Would they incite ministers to fidelity in their preaching? Their charge was made not in view of death, but "before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and kingdom." (2 Tim. 4 : 1.) And so the Saviour himself. When He would arouse men to a right estimate of the miseries of exchanging the soul for what this world can furnish, He talks not of the vanity of life and the certainty of death, but refers them to the one great fact, that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father, with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." (Matt. 16 : 26, 27.) When He would have men take up testimony for Him, the only motive He presented was, "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in His own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." (Luke 9 : 26.) It was the same, also, in the preaching of John the Baptist, and in that of the seventy evangelists; and it always must be so where our ministerial addresses properly conform to the order and connections in which God has delivered His own truth.

Contrary, then, to all this shifting of Christ's second appearing into the background, whilst other motives and anticipations, however scriptural in themselves, are advanced into its room, the injunction of the text refers us directly to the personal advent of our Lord, as the great object to which we are to direct our thoughts, and with reference to which our watchings are to be performed. Preparation for that is preparation for everything else; and watching for that, we shall be duly alive to every other duty and requirement.

* "It is fresh in the memories of some of you," says Rev. William Newton, in his "Lectures on Daniel" (p. 213), "how, a short time ago, a faithful and honored minister of Christ, of large experience in his Master's work, declared in this pulpit that he was never conscious of making 'so little headway in proclaiming the truth, as when death, and the certainty of death, was his theme.'

"Riding out to attend a funeral some time since, with a minister of another denomination by my side, I said to him, 'Is there any one theme in handling which you feel that you are making less impression on your hearers than with almost any other?' He paused a few moments, and replied, 'I think there is.' 'And what is it?' 'Why,' said he, 'it is very strange,—I don't exactly understand it,—but *I seem never to be so unsuccessful as when I preach about death!*'"

REASONS WHY BELIEVERS SHOULD STUDY PROPHECY.

BY REV. JOHN COX.

We might plead strongly for propheey as *part* of the gracious revelation of God, and ask why it should be more neglected than any other portion of God's book? We might maintain that all who have a Bible should read it regularly

Digitized by Google

through, as well as more frequently turn to favorite doctrinal and consolatory portions; but the arguments adduced on behalf of the study of prophecy shall refer to its own intrinsic claims. We shall consider, then,

1. *The grandeur of the subject.* Prophecy—what is it? To prophesy is to foretell events yet hidden in the womb of futurity. Prophecy discloses to us God's thoughts about the future—my future—man's future—the world's future. How many will listen to the conjectures of clever men; but when God delivers prophecies, how few diligently hearken! This is ungrateful and unwise; for, in revealing to us the future, God treats us with peculiar grace and confidence, and discloses to us what intimately concerns ourselves as well as His own glory. "We are prospective as well as retrospective creatures; and prophecy is the nourishment provided for part of our nature." The subject of divine prophecy is wonderful, whether we consider its Author, the instruments employed, the various methods of communicating it, or the lofty themes dwelt upon. Prophecy displays God's foreknowledge; and, in studying it, we are brought into communion with Himself. Prophecy spans all time, and reaches forward to the ages of ages. It takes in a large portion of the world's history, and contains the most accurate records extant of the mightiest nations. It is a map of the journeyings of God's church; a description of all her enemies throughout all ages. It clearly reveals the triumph of God's people, and the destruction of His foes.

2. *The glory of the chief theme of prophecy* demands for it our reverent study. The first note of the prophetic harp ("the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent"), being interpreted by other oracles, means that "the eternal Son of God shall become man, shall suffer, die, and triumph in His own person, shall save those who trust in Him, and reign together with them forever." Almost the last note of that tuneful harp is, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Prophecy without Jesus is a body without life. He is the *inspirer* of all prophecy. It is a beautiful, refreshing, instructive shadow, cast from Him, the glorious substance. He *pervades* it. It is as full of Him as the living body is full of the animating soul. He is its glorious centre. The first and second advents of the Saviour are the two centres round which prophecy revolves. He also *performs* it; *prophecy fulfilling is Jesus acting.* He opens the seven-sealed book, for He alone is worthy to do so; for this He hath all power in heaven and in earth. *Prophecy fulfilled is Jesus manifested.* This may be largely traced to His first advent, and present glory; and it shall be still more largely displayed when the day of the revelation of Jesus Christ shall come. Then, when He appears the Conqueror, the Bridegroom, the King, the Renovator, all the prophets shall do Him homage as the great substance and fulfiller of their lofty predictions. (Acts 3:21.) Then shall the minuteness and magnificence of prophecy be seen; and those holy men "who searched what and what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow," shall, when they stand in the midst of that glory, see the amazing fulness of their own predictions. If these things are so, it follows, that to neglect prophecy is to overlook part of the glory of Christ, and to do this is to grieve the Holy Spirit, and to rob our own souls of much that ministers to the joyfulness of hope.

3. *There are special promises to encourage believers to study prophecy.* That book which, above all others, has been perverted or neglected, is specially commended to our attention, and a promise is made to those who humbly study it: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the word of prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein, for the time is at hand." (Rev. 1:3.) Let not the taunts of even good men, who may charge you with presumption, discourage you from prayerfully reading this blessed book, so sublime, spiritual, and solacing, to the observance of which God has attached a special blessing. There may be in it many things you cannot as yet understand; but as others, besides learned astronomers, may be benefited by gazing on the midnight heavens, so you, though the simplest believer, shall not study this book in vain. There you shall see

Digitized by Google

the glory of Jesus; the interest which he takes in the concerns of His Church; the absolute certainty of the triumph of that righteous cause so dear to you; and these themes and thoughts shall awaken reverent feelings and rejoicing hopes. Here is a blessing for the devout student; and some one has well said, that "we are none of us so rich as to be able to afford to lose a blessing."

We should also observe, that in the passage of Peter, recently quoted, it is said, "that *unto us* the prophets did minister the things which are now reported unto you." Thus we are taught that we, who live under this present dispensation, are the *special heirs* of the prophecies, and particularly of the revelation of the glory of Christ and His Church, which they unfold.

4. *The utility of prophecy* is an argument for the earnest study of it. The present age is considered to be an eminently practical one; we wish that, in the best sense, it was more worthy of the name. There is certainly a disposition to inquire, concerning systems and theories, "What is their use? what shall we gain by them?" Prophecy will abide this test far better than many other studies and pursuits upon which much time and energy are expended. We have divine authority for this assertion. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." (2 Pet. 1:19.) Prophecy is here called "*a light.*" Light is beautiful and beneficial; it discovers, directs, and cheers; it is the favorite Scripture emblem to set forth knowledge, joy, and purity. True, light is mysterious in its origin and nature; whether it is matter or motion, the learned cannot tell us; but we do not despise it because we cannot comprehend it, nor refuse to use it because we fail to define it. Let us act thus as regards prophecy. The world is dark; ignorance, sin, error, misery abound. Reason and philosophy cannot guide us through the present, or animate us by revealing the future. Prophecy can and doth perform both these kind offices for us. We have to traverse a dark wilderness; oh! for a heaven-lit lamp, to be to us that which the cloudy pillar was to Israel! We have to navigate a dangerous ocean, abounding with rocks; oh! for a beacon-light, by its friendly glare to reveal our danger, and to point to the desired haven. Clouds and darkness are sometimes around our Father's throne; oh! for a ray to pierce them, to tell us that His name is *Love*, and that He overruleth all things for His own glory and our good. Prophecy is that friendly lamp, that beacon-light, that teaching ray, "whereunto," it is expressly declared, "we do well to take heed."

5. *The commendation bestowed upon a prophetic student of old, and the honors heaped upon him, should stimulate us to study.* Daniel, the man "greatly beloved," was a devout, prayerful, and practical student of prophecy. He stands out in glorious contrast with Balaam, through whose gifted mind a flood of heavenly light rolled, but which left him still in darkness. Behold Daniel on his knees, studying the prophecies of Jeremiah (Dan. 9); listen to him how he pours out his full heart in penitential confession and wrestling supplication; nor did he plead in vain. The angel Gabriel was caused to fly swiftly, with the following cheering message: "O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding... Thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision." (Dan. 9:22, 23.) A similar declaration was made to him afterwards: "Fear not, Daniel: for from the *first day* that thou didst set thy heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words" (10:12); "I will show thee that which is noted in the Scriptures of truth." (Verse 21.) These testimonies prove the approbation and delight with which God contemplates those who humbly and devotionally "set themselves to understand the truth." *We* may not expect an angel to fly swiftly to us, with a commending word, but we may expect the presence and teachings of HIM by whom holy men of old spake, and concerning whom Jesus said to His disciples, "He shall show you things to come," and, in so doing, teach, comfort, sanctify you, and gorify Me.

The last glance we get of Daniel in the Sacred Word is fervently desiring more light

Digitized by Google

concerning the future. "I heard, but I understood not: then said I, O my Lord, what shall be the end of these things?" (12:8.) Though it was not the will of God *then* fully to answer the question, or to reveal those things which were "*closed up and sealed to the time of the end*," yet still some information was given, and the Divine complacency in Daniel was discovered by the consoling promise with which the book closes: "Go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days."

6. *The peculiar times in which we live, furnish an argument for the study of prophecy.* What wonders have been wrought, how many prophecies have been fulfilled, and how many new predictions given, since the time of Daniel! And now, "the time of the end" is drawing near. The last days will be "perilous times." Then will be the season of rapid fulfilment of prophecy; the time when the energy of Satan and the power of God will be both put forth in an unprecedented manner. *We* have seen extraordinary events occur in our times, and these events have attracted some degree of attention to prophecy, and led men to ask, "What will be next?" There is reason to believe that all we have seen is "but the ripple compared with the breaker." There is great danger when there is a lull in the storm, lest men relapse into greater forgetfulness. The skilful mariner does not look merely at the waves just around his vessel; his practised eye sees the storm in the distance, and he prepares accordingly. But how shall we be prepared for coming events unless we study the book of prophecy, in order to "discover the signs of the times?" It is the duty of the Church to warn the heedless world of the approaching storm, as Noah warned the ungodly of the coming deluge; but how can she do so, unless she reads her commission, and is "moved with fear," even as Noah was? Such testimony may not be welcome, but it must be borne. Just before the first destruction of Jerusalem, there were many who cried, "Peace, peace; the temple of the Lord are we." But, one sorrowful-hearted weeping prophet was constrained to contradict them all, and to announce the speedy coming of the desolating storm. He was despised, ridiculed, and imprisoned; *but still his words were verified;* and that very prophet hath said, "Behold, the whirlwind of the Lord goeth forth with fury, a continuing whirlwind: it shall fall with pain on the wicked. The fierce anger of the Lord shall not return, until He have done it, and until He have performed the intents of His heart; in the latter days ye shall consider it." (Jer. 30:23, 24.) May we all consider it *before* it comes, and then, being found in Christ, we shall escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. (Luke 21:26.) And let us bear in mind, that to us as well as His disciples, Jesus says, "*But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.*" (Mark 13:23.)

Such are some of the reasons why prophecy *should* be diligently studied.

Editorial.

(THE WORLD TO COME.)

VERY many of the objections made to the advent doctrine are founded upon the difficulties which are supposed to attend upon what seems to be the mixed and incongruous state of things on the earth after the coming of the Lord. It is asked, "Is it not strange to suppose that men in resurrection bodies and men in the flesh shall both be living on the earth at the same time? And is it not degrading to suppose the Lord Jesus will reign in visible glory at Jerusalem, surrounded, perhaps, by the pomp and splendor of an earthly court?"

We reply, the objections involve a gross misconception of the doctrine.

The Scriptures do not teach that the Lord and His saints are to reign *on* the earth during the millennium, but *over* the earth. (Such is the meaning of ἐπι, Rev. 5:10.) Nor is the holy city, their abode, to be set up on the earth until the final catastrophe, and the restoration of all things. The millennial reign of Christ is

Digitized by Google

an intermediate stage between this present evil world and the new heavens and earth. In this preliminary stage of the Lord's triumph the kingdom of God is established on the earth, but Satan is only *bound*. In the final stage Satan is cast into the lake of fire, and the earth becomes the metropolis of the universe.

The Scriptures undoubtedly teach that, at the Lord's coming,

1. The saints shall be raised or translated, and be invested with judgment and dominion.

2. The Jews shall be restored, and made pre-eminent among the nations of the earth. Here, then, it is said, we have two ruling classes, and a mixed kingdom of men in the flesh, and men raised from the dead.

But the difficulty is solved through a right apprehension of the two callings, that of the Church, and that of the Jewish people. The calling of the Jews is to *earthly* pre-eminence, to kingdom power on the earth. The new nation God is gathering in this dispensation has a *heavenly* calling. The saints are to reign with Christ in heaven. Hence, for them, a special tabernacle is provided, which is nowhere said to be set up on the earth in the millennial times, but which must yet be in manifest relation to the earth, the source and seat of that authority and influence the saints are to exercise in its affairs.

There are other kinds of rule than those which pertain to earthly sovereignty. We are told that now the affairs of this world are ruled by principalities and powers in the heavenly places. The "prince of this world" and his angels are not yet cast out. In the days of Daniel there was a "Prince of Persia," and a Prince which stood for the prophet's people.

Had we time we should love to multiply proofs that these powers are also intimately connected with what we, in our blindness, call the "powers of nature." All kinds of physical evil are, in the Scriptures, ascribed to Satan.

And the intervention of good angels in human affairs was often attended by extraordinary natural phenomena. For example, the rolling of the stone from the door of the sepulchre by an earthquake was the work of an angel. A close examination of the Scripture references would develop the fact that all the laws and forces of nature are means through which spiritual powers, both good and evil, act upon and control human affairs.

We know that now all angels, authorities, and powers, are made subject to Christ. We also learn from the 8th Psalm, as quoted in the 2d of Hebrews, and from other Scriptures, that, in the world to come, the sons of God are to be joint-heirs with Christ in this sovereignty.

What if the rule of the saints over the millennial earth be of this nature? This it doubtless will be; although, besides this, they will exercise direct judicial and royal authority over the earth. And yet men in the flesh may be their vicegerents and executives. In the patriarchal age God made known and executed His will through angels. They talked, and even ate and lodged with men. If, in the millennial times, the children of the resurrection, made like unto the angels, perform this office, and exercise a ministry like that to which we have referred, the objections noticed at the outset are at once met. Their control of the natural world will doubtless be of a higher order than that now exercised by angels. They are joint-heirs with Christ; they are sons of God. Moreover, their relationship to the race from which they sprang will doubtless contribute to their fitness for this office.

And for them a becoming tabernacle is provided, even the holy city, New Jerusalem, whose builder and maker is God. This glorious abode, hanging in the skies, above the earth, will thus become the source of light, and joy, and boundless benefits to men. And here, probably, is the origin of the extraordinary change in the earth's soil and climate that shall then be produced. Did our limits permit, we should love to call attention to the many passages which speak of the light and the glory of God, and of the results ascribed to it when it shall fill the earth.

It would appear that we are not presumptuous in believing that this celestial city, filled with the light and presence of God, shedding down its beneficent rays on the earth, will greatly modify its climate, enhance its fertility, and be the source of health, and purity, and

Digitized by Google

happiness. And from its gates the Lord Jesus and His messengers pass back and forth to earth in a twinkling, on their errands of authority and mercy.

But our readers may wonder where is the evidence. This is a beautiful conjecture. But where is the Scripture? Recollect that we are now assuming the advent doctrine to be true, and are only proposing to meet objections by offering a possible solution. If this solution *may* be true, if it *may* be reasonably supposed, and it cannot be disproved, then it answers the purpose of the argument. But we are not left to reason here from the silence of Scripture. There are many passages and events recorded there which light up wonderfully under this explanation.

1. Jacob's dream appears to be a picture of this coming age. Journeying towards the East, he lay, wearied, down to sleep, a stone for his pillow. There God met him, and confirmed to him and to his seed the promise of the land, a promise not yet completely fulfilled. And there, in vision, he beheld a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending. And in the morning, when he awoke, he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. How dreadful is this place. This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." He knew not the full import of his words; for on that very spot is to be realized the state of things we have described, and which the vision foreshadowed, when the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, shall fulfil His promise to His ancient people, and bless all the families of the earth with Messiah's reign. The holy city in the heavens, the earthly Jerusalem on that very site, the gate of heaven, and the raised saints, ascending and descending on the pathway of light, fulfilling their ministries of rule and blessing, would realize, to the letter, the glorious vision with which the Lord met the lonely traveller, on that weary night, when, flying from his home, it seemed that the God of his fathers had forgotten His covenant, and remembered His oath no more.

And here we naturally recall our Lord's prophetic words to Nathaniel, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." He doubtless refers to the prophetic view of the kingdom of God granted to Jacob, and indicates how the promise, included in it, is to be fulfilled. The beneficent rule of the Son of man shall be extended over the earth, from the heavenly city, through the ministry of the children of the resurrection. This was the wonder Nathaniel was hereafter to see, as a reward for his saving confession, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."

2. A beautiful symbol is found in the pillar of cloud and of fire which overhung the camp of Israel in their march through the desert. That pillar of cloud was the abode of the God of Israel; and from it he guided, instructed, and ruled them, blessing them with manna for their hunger, and defending them against assault.

So, when the Lord shall appear in His glory, there will be again His pavilion in the heavens, the holy city, above the camp of Israel, shedding down its ministry of rule, and instruction, and beneficence, upon them and upon all the Gentiles who come to its light, and to the brightness of its rising.

3. A more striking symbol was furnished by the Jewish tabernacle, and afterwards in the temple.

It was divided into three compartments; first, the holy of holies, where abode the shekinah, and into which none but the high priest entered. This was a perfect cube. Outside was the holy place, the court of the Jews. Still outside was a larger court, the court of the Gentiles. Here, then, we have an exact picture of the time when the tabernacle, which the Lord shall pitch, and not man, shall be revealed. The heavenly city, of which God is the builder, is described as a perfect cube; "and the city lieth four square. . . . . The length, and the breadth, and the height of it, are equal." And in it is the true shekinah. "The glory of God and of the Lamb is the light thereof." And into it enter none but the royal priesthood of the future. The tabernacle of Moses was a shadow of things to come. He

Digitized by Google

made it according to the pattern shown him in the mount. The most holy place in it corresponds to the heavenly city. Both are perfect cubes. Both are the abode of the glory of God.

The court of the Jews corresponds to the Jewish nation in the millennial age. They will be the earthly tabernacle. The nation will be all sanctified; but they will not enter the new Jerusalem, the most holy place. The raised saints will minister between them and the mercy-seat on high.

The court of the Gentiles corresponds to the nations of the earth, who will come up to Jerusalem to worship before the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. Thus we have the three compartments of the house of the Lord, as it will be when the earth shall be filled with His glory.

4. The transfiguration is a no less striking picture of the world to come, whereof we speak. The Lord takes Peter, James, and John, the three favored disciples, up into a mount, and is transfigured before them. From Peter's second epistle we infer that he understood the meaning of the vision to be, the Lord's assumption before them of the glory with which He is now invested, and in which He will appear. It was a vision of the coming kingdom of God. With him appeared also Moses and Elijah. Moses represents the raised saints (see Jude), and Elijah, those who are translated at His coming. Here, then, were the two distinct classes of men. The Lord Jesus, the glorious Head of the kingdom, and, under Him, 1st, Moses and Elias, representing the raised and translated saints; 2d, Peter, James, and John, men in the flesh. The bright, overshadowing cloud, represents the Celestial City, from which the saints proceed, and into which patriarchs, and prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, and saints of all ages, the living and the dead, will be gathered, and through whose kingly priesthood earth shall be brought into blessed contact and intimacy with heaven.

Oh, happy day! Blessed consummation! when this holy city, which, now shining afar, is seen only as a bright and morning star, and that only to the eye of an enlightened faith (Rev. 2 : 28), shall come down from God, and hang out its glory in the heavens, above this sin-cursed earth, the rising sun of its redemption, the glittering sign that the world's rejected King is coming to assume His crown, and when His chosen ones shall be gathered to reign with Him into that Jerusalem which is above, and is the mother of us all. Then will be fulfilled to Israel those beautiful words of Isaiah (ch. 4 : 5, 6; 24 : 23; 60 : 19–21): "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously." "The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory. The sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy noon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended. Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land forever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." L. C. B.

TALK WITH OUR READERS ABOUT COMMON THINGS.

DEMONISM *alias* SPIRITUALISM.

No. 7.

ONE characteristic of the demon-teaching of the last days remains to be considered, viz.: *The seducing spirits command to abstain from meats, that is, from food.* In the Popish foreshadowing, this is seen in the feigned holiness of asceticism, and the prohibition of meat on Fridays. But how does it apply to spiritualism? We have no doubt that this characteristic will be found not a whit less marked than the others. It must be remembered, however, that the system is not yet fully developed; and this

Digitized by Google

mark is, as yet, less prominent than the rest. It is likely that the prohibition to abstain from meats, or food, will arise, like other parts of the system, from a pretended sympathy for "suffering creation," and a pretended superior refinement, inasmuch as the eating of meat, in its restricted sense, involves the taking of life. But we suspect that the chief object is to make the human frame more susceptible to supernatural impressions, by reducing the system through a course of training, and correspondingly exalting the psychological element. It is a well-known fact that many persons who had been weakened by lingering and emaciating disorders have become the subjects of trances and clairvoyant phenomena. We also find in Col. 2 : 23 a warning concerning this sort of "neglecting of the body." Perhaps, too, the spirits, when they shall have obtained full control, will prescribe abstinence from certain articles, as a sort of test of spiritual membership.

We should be glad if any of our readers could throw a little more light on this part of the subject, derived from their personal knowledge of the practice of spiritual circles.

Frequent indications are, however, already, not wanting, of the prohibition in question. The following has been reported to us, from a trustworthy source.

"The fifth mark, commanding to abstain from eating meats, is still more unmistakably manifested. And it is remarkable that the spirits command these things, not the spiritualists. Even the mediums do not pretend to teach it themselves, except as they receive it by direct communication from the spirits. These spiritualists abstain from everything that is derived from an animal. They take no milk in their tea, nor butter, nor eggs, because these articles of food are of animal origin. One spiritualist bookseller went to his bookbinder, and told him to take all the leather bindings off his books, and bind them in cloth. The binder told him he must use glue, and that came from an animal. He said he would have them without binding, if he couldn't get a mucilage without animal substance. He succeeded in getting a mucilage of that character from a chemist, but the binder refused to bind for him out of the regular way. Whether he succeeded in getting a more accommodating binder, I never heard."

The modern demonism, commonly called "spiritualism," bears, as we have shown, all the marks of the latter-day invention of Satan, predicted in the opening verses of 1 Tim. 4. If it is true that there is nothing new under the sun, yet it can hardly be denied that this is a new *phase* of sorcery, adapted, in Satan's usual manner, to the aspect of the times, and brought out on a far more extensive scale than ever heretofore. Formerly, witchcraft was in bad repute, and was exceptional in its character; but now, ways and means have been devised to make it attractive, fashionable, and universal, by allying it with progress, liberty, refinement, enjoyment, and the prevalent ideas of the ungodly age. Men are being insensibly accustomed to intercourse with supernatural beings; and if, in a little while, the character of the spiritual agents should be discovered to have an origin heretofore associated with the regions of darkness, it will make but little difference, provided that compensation shall be found in the advantages bestowed. They will be first "endured," then "pitied," then "embraced." It will be discovered that many of the repulsive features were only imaginary, or were greatly distorted by "superstitious tradition," "prejudice," &c. &c. And thus the field will be left clear for the open manifestation of the great enemy, when he shall marshal his forces for his supreme effort, and for the *open* alliance between himself and the race of man, in the shape of the predicted Antichristian confederacy. Already multitudes have been seduced from the Christian faith. And no one who is acquainted with the blasphemous denial and perversion of all the cardinal doctrines of grace which "spiritualism" makes, can fail to see the prophetic mark of "doctrines of devils." It speaks lies in hypocrisy, without compunction, as only those can whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron. It forbids to marry, and commands to abstain from meats.

And, besides all this, it bears other marks pointed out in the Holy Scriptures, which the Holy Spirit hath spoken expressly concerning

Digitized by Google

it. All its pompous and lying pretensions about angelic intercourse were, long since, pointed out by Him. It has, indeed, a "show of wisdom, in will-worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body." (Col. 2 : 23.) It makes a great pretence to "philosophy," which, however, is only "empty deceit, according to the precepts of men, and according to the elementary arrangements of the world." (Col. 2 : 8.) We find in it a "voluntary humility and *worshipping of* (so-called) *angels*." We find men that are misled by it, "*intruding into those things which they have not seen*, vainly puffed up by their fleshly minds." (Col. 2 : 18.) We find them speaking "*great swelling words of vanity*," and "catching souls by a bait," through "the lusts of the flesh, and through much wantonness;" yea, even those "that were (for a little while) clean escaped from those who live in error." And there are multitudes ever ready to be enticed by such loud trumpetings of pompous transcendental nothings, the chaff in which the deadly poison is concealed. These have "LIBERTY" promised them; whereas, in fact, the spirits and their duped and duping mediums are themselves the slaves of corruption; "for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought into bondage." (2 Pet. 2 : 18, 19.) These experts in the new "Harmonial Philosophy" profess that they *know God;* but in their conduct they deny Him, being "*abominable* and *disobedient*, and unto every good work *reprobate*." (Titus 1 : 16.) Their doctrines are the commadments of men that turn from the truth (v. 14); for even their mind and conscience are defiled (v. 15). These are the false teachers who *privily* have brought in damnable heresies, *even denying the Lord who bought them;* who shall bring upon themselves *swift* destruction. We find many following their pernicious ways; and by reason of them the way of truth in Jesus is evil spoken of. And it is also true that through *covetousness*, they, with feigned words, and pretended love of virtue, make merchandise of souls. (2 Pet. 2 : 1.) These are they that walk after the flesh in *the lust of uncleanness*, and *despise government*, full of revolutionary and socialistic teachings. Presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. As natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, they speak evil of the things that they understand not; ridiculing the holy and divine religion of Jesus Christ, through which, alone, we can be saved. These are they that even *sport* themselves with their own deceivings. They have *eyes of adultery*, that cannot cease from sin, beguiling unstable souls; a heart have they exercised with covetous practices—cursed children. (2 Pet. 2 : 10–14.) These are they that *creep into houses*, and lead captive silly women, laden with sins, led away with divers lusts; women who are always learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of what is really truth. (2 Tim. 3 : 6, 7.) It is in them, also, that we find the characteristics mentioned in verse 2–5.

And as for their other features, as traced in the sacred word, our readers will now hardly be at a loss to discover them. No wonder, then, that the time has now come, when so many in Christendom, and even in the Evangelical Churches, will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. No marvel, then, that there are so many who turn away their ears from the truth, and are turned unto fables; who love orthodox evangelical teaching, in the abstract, but are dead-set against any practical application of it, from the pulpit, to the times, and to their fashionable wickednesses. (2 Tim. 4 : 3, 4.) No wonder there are scoffers at the second advent as ever to occur, much less in our generation! How "unscientific," "visionary," and "low!" (2 Pet. 3 : 3.) And what have we to expect but that these evil men and seducers will wax *worse and worse*, DECEIVING AND BEING DECEIVED? (2 Tim. 3 : 13.)

Should these remarks fall under the eye of any one that has been entangled in the snare of "spiritualism," or that is disposed, from what he has seen or heard, to look favorably upon it, we would say to him, in the most earnest manner, Escape for thy life; look not behind! Stop not to parley, lest you should be lost; for these paths take hold on death, and lead to the place where the loving Saviour and his blood-bought redemption cease to call the guilty to return, and be blest.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. MAY, 1865. No. 5.

Special Contributions.

THE DESTINY OF OUR EARTH AND RACE.

We have now gone over the principal points of the argument from Scripture, in support of the views here advocated, that our earth, removed from the crushing burden of the curse, and purified by the conflagration of the last days, will remain in existence forever; and that a remnant of our race, representing both Jews and Gentiles, recovered from the taint of original sin and made pure and holy, though still in the flesh, shall possess and people the earth in successive generations throughout the ages of eternity. This is the view of "*The Destiny of our Earth and Race*" for which we have been arguing in the series of articles on this subject, contributed to the pages of "The Prophetic Times." Before dismissing the subject, it may be well to say a few words in reference to some of the objections urged against the views of this subject now presented.

It is sometimes objected that the advocates of this idea entertain low and carnal views of the final condition of the redeemed. This objection is urged on two grounds. Many persons, without clearly apprehending the subject, jump to the conclusion that it is the redeemed, whom Christ is now gathering out of the world—"the Church of the first-born," "the children of the resurrection"—who are intended to be the future occupants and inhabitants of the earth. They suppose it is intended to teach that there will be the distinction of sex, and the continuance of generation, after the resurrection, on the part of those who are partakers of the resurrection, and then they reject the whole idea as gross, carnal, and revolting. *And so it would be if this were the view entertained and taught.* But this is entirely to misapprehend the matter. The persons who make this objection have failed to take in that twofold condition of our race, in the glorious and everlasting future of this earth, of which the Scriptures speak. We are told of "new *heavens*," as well as a "new *earth*." We are told of a "*heavenly* Jerusalem"—a "Jerusalem *which is above*," as well as an *earthly* Jerusalem, a Jerusalem *which is beneath*. We are told of a "kingdom which is to have no end," and of some who are to be "*kings and priests* unto God and the Lamb" in this everlasting kingdom. We are also told of "*the nations of them that are saved*." (Rev. 21: 24.) And again, of "all people and nations and languages," who are made the *subjects* of the promised kingdom, which is never to pass away. Now, these different expressions of "the new heavens and the new earth," of the kingdom with its "kings and priests," and also with its subjects, consisting of bodies of men still existing as "nations, people, and languages," evidently contemplate the existence of our race in *two entirely distinct and different states of being*. The former have been saved as individuals. They have "passed through the grave and gate of death to a joyful resurrection;" or else they have been "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." Their place of abode is the heavenly Jerusalem, of which the Lamb is the temple, the light and glory. With them, all distinction of sex is done away. Among them is found "neither male nor female, neither Jew nor Gentile." They have attained unto the re-

Digitized by Google

surrection state. They can "neither marry nor be given in marriage." They will be associated with Christ, as kings and priests, in administering the affairs of his everlasting kingdom. This is *one* condition of being, in which we find our race represented, amidst the coming everlasting age of blessedness and glory. This class, or condition, takes in the whole "election of grace," the entire company of the redeemed, gathered out of the successive generations of our race down to the time of our Saviour's second coming.

The other state, in which we find our race represented, in the coming age, is totally different from this. It embraces remnants of different nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles. As nations, or bodies of men, they have been saved out of the tribulations of the last days. They have never felt the power of death, nor been raised to the resurrection state. They are still in the flesh, though freed from sin and made pure and holy. They will inhabit the earth forever. They will marry and be given in marriage. They, and their children, in successive generations, through everlasting ages, will be the subjects of that glorious kingdom over which Christ and his resurrection saints will reign, in joy, and peace and happiness, forever and ever. The distinction between these two classes or states of being is as great as that between heaven and earth. And for the resurrection people of Christ to exercise the functions of their royal priesthood, under such circumstances, and amidst such surroundings, certainly involves nothing that is gross, or low, or carnal. It is not the redeemed in the glory of their heavenly state, but the saved nations inhabiting the earth among whom the marriage relation will be kept up, with its natural consequence of successive generations following each other.

The objection will hardly be carried so far as to affirm, or intimate, that the *mere fact of ministering on the earth at all*, on the part of the redeemed in glory, involves anything inconsistent with the highest honor and happiness of their final condition. Our Saviour said of those "who should be counted worthy to attain unto this state, and be the children of the resurrection," that they should be "*equal to the angels*." I suppose this is a condition of being high enough, and happy enough, and glorious enough to satisfy the cravings of the loftiest ambition. And yet we are to bear in mind that the angels are occupied in the functions of a similar ministry in *the earth now*. We know, on the highest authority, that "they are *all ministering spirits*, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation." (Heb. 1 : 14.) Their ministrations are carried on amidst the ruins of the fall. They wait on sinful men, in scenes of temptation, surrounded by endless forms of sorrow, and suffering, and sin, yet there is nothing low, or carnal, in their condition. There is nothing in the scene of their ministrations, or in the circumstances surrounding them, either to mar their happiness or detract from the glory of their high estate. What possible grounds then can there be for the indulgence of such a supposition in reference to the position awaiting the redeemed in their resurrection state? They will then have a position analogous to that which the angels now occupy. It will, indeed, be a position, in many respects, superior to that of the angels. The ministry of the angels is secret and invisible; that of the saints will be open and manifest. The angel-ministry is exercised in a fallen world, amidst the groans of a creation oppressed and burdened by the curse; the ministry of the ransomed will be exercised in a world from which the curse has been removed, and where all the ruin wrought by sin has been remedied. The angel-ministry is carried on in the midst of scenes of sin, suffering, and sorrow. The redeemed will exercise their ministry in connection with holy beings, to whom sin, and suffering, and sorrow will be wholly unknown. Certainly then, when properly considered, there is not the slightest foundation for the objection that the view here advocated of "The Destiny of our Earth and Race" is calculated to favor the impression that in the final condition of Christ's resurrection saints there is anything low, or gross, or carnal.

Another objector turns to 2 *Peter* 3, *which describes the purifying conflagration of the last days, and asks, What do you do with those*

Digitized by Google

"*nations of them that are saved*," *during the progress of that conflagration?* We admit that here is a real difficulty; or rather, it would be a difficulty, if the work of directing that conflagration, and carrying the remnants of the saved nations through it were left in *our* hands. If feeble man were to be the agent, a difficulty like this would be insuperable. But the Agent in this case is *Omnipotence*. Why should we speak of difficulties in *His* way? *Can anything be too hard for Jehovah?* That He has not seen fit to reveal to us how this result is to be accomplished is not surprising. It does not concern, in any way, the question of our salvation. Our interest, or happiness, or duty, is in no degree involved in it. It is just one of those points which we might expect to have left in the dark, as it is left. And yet there is one passage in which God seems to give an *intimation* of the way in which this object will be accomplished. In Isaiah 51: 16, God says to the Jewish people, "I have covered thee in the shadow of mine hand, that I may plant the heavens, and lay the foundation of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people." There seems to be a reference here to some miraculous putting forth of His almighty power for the protection of that nation while the stupendous work of making the new heavens and the new earth should be in progress. We know that His wisdom is infinite; His resources are exhaustless. And we may safely leave it with Him to surmount the difficulty in such way as He shall choose.

The only other objection that now comes to mind assumes this shape: If there is to be a constant increase in the inhabitants of the earth, and at the same time no death, there will soon be an amount of population greater than the world can accommodate: what then is to become of the surplus population? This is another matter, like the one just considered, that would be an insuperable obstacle in our way, if *human skill* or *resources* had the management of the affair; but if left in the hands of the Ruler of the Universe, it is no difficulty at all. Our planet, which has so long been an exile from the great family of worlds which people space, will then have the ban of outlawry removed, the decree of exile taken off. There will be open communication between heaven and earth, between this world and other worlds, and *translation to other parts of God's unbounded empire*, when men shall have finished their education, and the full development of their powers here has been secured, would easily and naturally obviate this difficulty, and keep the earth relieved of its surplus population. That changes of this kind will occur in the administration of the affairs of God's universal government it is natural enough to suppose. They must be inevitable. Indeed we have a clear intimation of one of these changes on a grand scale, given us by St. Paul in Heb. 2: 5. Here we read, "For unto the angels hath He not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak." The world that now is, we know *is* "*in subjection to the angels*." That is, its providential government is carried on by the aid of their ministry. But with "the world to come," *i. e.*, with the renewed and restored earth, this will not be the case. *That* world will be put in subjection to the resurrection saints. *They* will be "kings and priests unto God and the Lamb." In "the world to come," *i. e.* in the renewed and glorified earth, *they will take the position which the angels occupy in the earth as it now exists*. Then Daniel's prophecy will be fulfilled, and "the time will have come for the saints to possess the kingdom." And if this is so, the question arises what will become of the angels? They will—to use the language of military men—be relieved from the command now intrusted to them, and be required to report elsewhere for duty. God will employ them in service in some other part of his vast dominions. And if angels may be thus transferred from one part of the universe to another, it is natural enough that the same may take place with men. Admit this idea once—certainly it is a reasonable idea—and then all difficulty about the over population of the earth disappears in a moment.

And thus if there is nothing in the views now advocated that conflicts with the teachings of Scripture, and if they tend to enlarge immeasurably the circle through which the blessings of redemption shall be spread, and thus

Digitized by Google

add to the revenue of praise and glory which shall flow in to the great *Author* and *Finisher* of redemption forever, then there is ground for rejoicing if it can be shown that they are views fairly deducible from the testimony of God's infallible truth. R. N.

"THY WILL BE DONE IN EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN."

Not long since I wrote a short article on the Kingdom of the Heavens, or the Kingdom of God. Intimately connected with that subject is this petition of our Lord's Prayer, on which I will now give you a few thoughts, hoping that they may not be unprofitable.

What is implied in this petition, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven?" As perfect obedience to God, and as perfect submission to His will, as is to be found in heaven—that earth shall be as loyal to God, and as faithful to Him, as any other province of His great kingdom. It is, then, a prayer for the restoration of that perfectly holy, resigned, and innocent state which existed before the fall. Anything short of such obedience as unfallen man yielded, would not be doing the will of God as it is done in heaven. We all believe that every unfallen angel perfectly obeys God in thought, word, and deed; that among all the hosts of the unfallen there is no sin. As often as we put up this petition of our Lord's Prayer, we pray that it may be so on earth; that every vestige of sin may be forever removed. Indeed, we pray that earth may again be a perfectly loyal province of God's great kingdom; that in all this earthly province there may be nothing to offend.

In the former petition, we pray that God's kingdom may be restored on earth; that the rebellion on earth may cease, so that it shall be a loyal and not a rebel province. In this petition, we pray that it may be a perfectly holy province, just as it was before the fall, and just as is every unfallen world. We do not pray for perfect holiness in heaven, but on earth. It is not that we may be perfectly holy when we get to heaven, but that perfect holiness may exist everywhere on earth, and that not merely in one heart or a few hearts, but in all hearts. It is not a prayer in which we ask that, before the restoration of the Kingdom of Heaven, we may be as holy as the angels in heaven; but as we pray, "Thy kingdom come," we add a petition, that everything that is wrong in this province may be removed, so that all hearts and all lives may be right.

I know that it should be the sincere and hearty desire of every Christian that he should be free from sin. His hatred of sin should be perfect. It should be his fervent prayer that others may be delivered from all sin; but the perfect removal of all sin from all hearts on earth, and the perfect submission of all hearts to God, is something that we have no right to expect until the great restoration shall take place, and earth shall again be a loyal province of God's kingdom. So that, while it is the duty of every Christian to heartily desire it, and pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven," we have no right to expect it until the kingdom shall come. Indeed, that petition comes first, "Thy kingdom come."

As we see what the kingdoms of this world are, and have been; how desperate has been the rebellion; how fearful have been the effects of sin in this world; what they must be in the sad world to come: it would seem as if every holy heart must heartily pray, "Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Indeed, until God shall undertake the work, bind Satan, quell the rebellion, and restore the earth to the brotherhood of the heavens, we shall see a miserable state of things in all nations. It seems strange that any one should desire all things to remain as they are, sin reigning as it does; Satan, as a devouring lion, going about everywhere; evil everywhere; misery everywhere; sadness everywhere on earth.

Reader, if you can have any hope in the governments of this world; in the administrations of any man, or any set of men, with Satan helping them; if you think man can reform the earth, then you need not put up these two petitions. But if your hope is in God, and only in Him, then heartily put up these petitions, and be "looking for and hastening unto the coming"

Digitized by Google

of their fulfilment. Be not satisfied until they are fulfilled.

Will this petition ever be answered? Will God's will ever be done in earth as it is in heaven? Yes. Can any Christian, for one moment, suppose that a prayer of the Saviour will not be answered? Perhaps, at times, their own prayers may be so full of doubt, fear, and unbelief, that they may have the right to expect that they will not be answered; but can they assign any reason why God should refuse to answer the prayer of His own Son? On this point it seems to be great guilt to doubt. Reader, can you doubt; can you, for one moment, doubt? Such are the promises of God that I feel well persuaded that if this prayer is not answered, the great object of the atonement will fail. If it is not answered, I feel assured that the failure will result in rebellion, misery, and misrule in every heavenly world. Let it fail to be answered, and not only is the hope of earth crushed, but the hope of every world. It is a work which Jesus has undertaken, and which He has promised shall be done; and if God's word fails in one thing, He is not worthy to be trusted by any world. But so sure as God is; so sure as the Bible is His word, this petition of the Saviour will be answered. Many passages of the Word of God declare it. Jesus has undertaken to repair the ruins of the fall; to effect the great restitution; and it will be done. Jesus has prayed for it; the holy in all ages have prayed for it, and those prayers must be answered. Its accomplishment is certain. Earth is not to remain a revolted province, neither is it to be annihilated. God does not destroy His own works, but the Devil's.

I will not detain you, reader, by quoting a great number of passages of Scripture; but I assure you, on their authority, that the day is coming when earth shall again be a holy, loyal province of God's kingdom; when it shall be restored to the brotherhood of the heavens; when it shall be restored to the state from which it has fallen. The day is coming when evil, as well as evil-doers, shall perish out of the earth. The second Adam will restore all that the first has lost,—yes, more. The curse shall be removed. The tree of life will be restored. Its leaves will heal the nations. "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain." "God will wipe away all tears from their eyes." He will do it on the earth, and not merely in heaven.

J. B.

Selections.

THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

BY REV. JOHN COX.

We are told, that *prophecy is so obscure* that it cannot be understood. It is true that there are many deep and mysterious things in prophecy. This is true also of the doctrinal and historical portions of God's Word. But the Bible contains milk for babes in its various departments. There are histories which a child can relish, and there are doctrinal truths which the simple believe to their salvation; and these truths are generally the most important and necessary. So it is in prophecy. Begin then to search, with earnestness and docility; and as you advance you will get more light, for in this, as in other things, it is true—"to him that hath, shall be given." Many persons, by simple prayerful searching of God's Word, have found such wonders in its revelations concerning the future, that the Bible, when its dispensational teachings were perceived, seemed a new book to them. One part of God's revelation sheds rays of beauty on the other; therefore we should diligently compare Scripture with Scripture.

But we are told, *that those who study prophecy differ so much among themselves!* I ask, is this difference confined to prophecy? Do not students of the Bible, and holy men too, differ as regards their views of Christian doctrines and ordinances; but do *you*, who raise

Digitized by Google

this objection, neglect the Bible on that account? You have formed your *creed*—you have made your *confession*—undeterred by the jarring sounds around you; why then should you treat prophecy differently from doctrines and ordinances? Besides, perhaps the difference complained of is more in *appearance* than reality. Many students of prophecy who differ as regards dates and symbols, and the order of events, are agreed on the principle of interpretation, and the grand outline of future glories and judgments. Of later years there has been a growing unanimity on the most important points.

Some will tell us that prophecy is *speculative*, and not *practical;* that it serves to amuse the sanguine, and employ the imaginative; but is not suited for practical men, and a practical age. Such objections are a reflection upon God, who is "wiser than men." We know "that *all* Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction," &c. And when we consider how *large* a portion of God's Word is prophetic, and remains yet to be fulfilled, we must at once conclude, that being a part of that Word over which the Saviour breathed the prayer, "*Father, sanctify them by thy truth*—THY WORD IS TRUTH," it must be most practical and animating. To this point we shall appeal hereafter, for the present only just observing, that the strongest motives to holiness, and the most persuasive exhortations to diligence, are found embedded in prophetic scriptures, especially those which refer to the coming of the Lord, the resurrection of the saints, the passing away of this present evil world, and the introduction of "a kingdom which cannot be moved." The whole prophetic word says to you, "Come and see" whether these things are so or not!

"But," some will say, "it does not bring present comfort to the soul; it is not *experimental*." You would find it so, dear friend, if your heart was interested in it, as were the hearts of Daniel and John. The peculiar advantage of the study of prophecy is, that it raises the soul out of self, and above the world, and brings it into fellowship with God. His glorious perfections are revealed in connection with prophecy. There we behold His gracious purposes accomplished; there we see His precious promises fulfilled; there we may contemplate the great wheel of providence; and as we consider its grandeur, and its mighty revolutions, employing all good, overruling all evil, and tending to the one point, the filling of this groaning creation with God's glory, we sing, "Who is a God like unto thee?" "Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory forever and ever."

There is nothing worthy of the name of *experimental* religion, but *fellowship with God.* We must first adopt God's revealed thoughts as regards the *death*, the *offices*, and *person* of His beloved Son, and thus have fellowship with Him in His purposes, promises, and providences, as revealed in, and accomplished by Him who is the *substance* and *fulfiller* of prophecy. If such is the nature of prophecy, how can you neglect it? How can you call it a *non-essential?* How can you say, "I have no time for it?" Do you not attend to many things of much less importance? Do you not find time for other books, which are puerile compared with "the sure word of prophecy?" If you are acting thus, we appeal to your conscience whether this course is consistent with enlightened spirituality of mind, and with true subjection of soul to the Word of God.

"But," another will object, "*for everything there is a season*, and the season for the study of prophecy is *when it is fulfilled.*" That fulfilled prophecy is an important evidence of the truth of Scripture is freely admitted; but is prophecy unimportant until *it is* fulfilled? God says to his people, "Behold, the former things *are come to pass*, and new things do I declare; before they spring forth, *I tell you of them.*" (Isa. 42 : 9.) Thus He has acted towards His people from age to age, to warn, guide, comfort, and animate them. God intends that "things to come" should influence our conduct at the present time, and therefore He reveals them, and would have us to know them. The "light shines in a dark place *until* the day dawn;" and we are exhorted to "take heed" unto it. (2 Pet. 1 : 19.) The beacon is needed *before* the ship is endangered amongst the

Digitized by Google

breakers; the mariner is thankful for the light-house *after* his vessel has reached the harbor; then he may view it with admiration, dwell on its adaptation, and praise the wisdom of those who erected it; *but* its great use was *before* he entered, and while tossed upon the billows. Some one has wisely said, "These prophetic communications set before us, in the history of nations as well as of individuals, the forms which sin assumes; the dangers to which, in consequence, men are exposed; the manner in which deliverance is obtained, and the nature of that deliverance." Thus we are taught by prophecy to shun the evil, to cleave to that which is good; and while we pursue the path of duty, calmly to leave all events in the hand of God.

We conclude with a few directions and counsels as to the best *method* of studying prophecy, and the *spirit* in which it should be studied.

Begin with *elementary* points. Prophecy has its alphabet, which must be learned before we can read it with any degree of fluency. Inquire what principle of interpretation is furnished by the past fulfilment of prophecy. What position does the personal coming of Christ occupy in the events yet to be revealed? Will the Lord come *before* or *after* the Millennium? This is the *first point* to be ascertained. Does the Bible foretell the restoration of the Jews? You will find an immense amount of Scripture bearing on this point. Are we gradually gliding into smoother waters, or are we hastening on to some terrible crisis? In searching out these and other *leading* points, first of all, *read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully*. Take, for instance, the second and seventh chapters of Daniel; read them till you get a general view of the events which they reveal. Compare scripture with scripture, the Old Testament with the New; as Isaiah 25: 8, with 1 Cor. 15: 54; Isa. 55: 17–25, with 2 Pet. 3: 13; Dan. 7: 13, 14, with Matt. 24: 30, 31; Psalm 8, with Heb. 2: 5–8; Isa. 11: 1–4, with 2 Thess. 2: 5–8; Isa. 9: 6, 7, with Luke 1: 32, 33. There is no method of studying the Scriptures so profitable as that of elucidating one portion by light derived from another.

While thus studying the prophetic Scriptures, *seek for wisdom from above. Be reverent and humble.* Pray to be delivered from prejudice, and yield yourself to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Prophecy is a solemn theme, and rightly entered into, it will make us feel our utter nothingness. Beware of letting your imagination mislead your judgment. Take care of mistaking sound for sense; passages containing some of the same words do not always mean the same thing, nor refer to the same time or events. Converse with fellow-students, "speak of God's kingdom, and talk of His power." The numbers of prophetic students are increasing, and from them much may be learned. *Bring all human opinions to the only infallible standard. Study prophecy as a disciple of Jesus.* Commence as such; continue as such. Rest in His atonement, while you look for His coming. (Titus 2: 11–14.) Do not neglect any other part of truth while you study this. Beware of undue partiality even for prophetic truth. Watch your own heart, that, with increasing light, pride and self-complacence do not creep in. Seek to turn all truth into soul-nourishment, and to find in it incentives to diligence, and motives for gratitude.

Prophecy, rightly studied, will be of singular advantage to the *mind*, the *heart*, and the *conduct*. It will be a shield against infidelity, a preservative from sin, and a spur to diligence. In the prophetic page are rich mines of truth, which will well repay the labors of the diligent student. Here are greater wonders for the believer's eye than ever greeted the gaze of the peering astronomer. It was said of Sir William Herschel, that on one occasion, after taking a sweep through the heavens with his large telescope, "the presence of Sirius announced itself from a great distance, like the coming of the morning. At length, it burst into his view with all the splendor of the rising sun, and he had to withdraw his eyes from the brilliant spectacle." While you look through the telescope of faith into the heaven of prophetic truth, "the bright and morning star" will burst upon your vision; but *you* shall not be obliged to withdraw your eye, but like that of the eagle,

Digitized by Google

it shall become more and more attempered to the glorious blaze. Then shall you soar, singing your song of joyful hope; and as you gaze, you shall "be changed more and more into the image" of Him on whom you look believingly, and for whom you look hopefully. And thus shall it be, until that blessed moment comes, when you shall be completely like him, and "see him as he is."

"Jesus Christ, the faithful witness,
First-begotten of the dead—
He who gave you form and fitness,—
He who calls himself your head,—

"Bids you read his word of warning,
Blessing those who firmly stand
In good works, his truth adorning,
For the time is near at hand."

THE YEAR 1866.

THE following has been copied from the *Hartford (Ct.) Times:* We give it simply for what it is worth. The facts of the story are doubtless authentic, but the prediction needs yet to be verified to entitle it to the credit of true prophecy. The warning is not out of place in these ominous and threatening times.—[*Ed.*]

"Some years since a discovery was made in this city which, though at the time regarded as only curious, seems now in the light of the present to be remarkable. A few days ago, an aged lady, a representative of a family of great repute in our Colonial days and in the early history of our State, died in this city. Among the estate which descended to her next kin was an old mansion situated on Main Street. Her heir, who is a gentleman now residing here, in looking over the various things which had been accumulating for more than a century, and stored away in the garret, found beneath a pile of rubbish a curiously carved, inlaid old box. The box is in itself a great curiosity; the carving upon it is very beautiful, and the whole finish of it is exquisite. The box was a good deal out of repair, and in looking it over to see what was necessary to be done to renovate it, upon one of the interior divisions were found written on wood these inscriptions of a prophecy. The first inscription is this rude rhyme:

"On July 14th, 1866,
America's fate is fixed."

Beneath it, in Latin, these words:

"O posteri, posteri, cavete vos
In anno 1866."—"O posterity, posterity,
Beware of the year 1866."

And signed,

"Propheticus es.—This is prophetic."

"Preceding these inscriptions is the date, July 14, 1766, and signed by the name of a gentleman who at that time was a distinguished inhabitant of Hartford.

"It will be observed that the date of this prophecy is ten years before the Declaration of Independence, and at a time when the attachment of the Colonies to Great Britain was at its height. That these inscriptions were made at the time they bear date there can be no doubt, for the signature above referred to is one which once seen cannot be mistaken, and occurs on many public documents in our archives."

A LONDON paper calls attention to the fact that "the year 1866, which Louis Napoleon has fixed on as the time for withdrawing his troops from Rome—which will be virtually leaving the Papacy in that city to its fate—is the very year which nearly all our most eminent commentators on the New Testament and writers on prophecy, from the time of Bishop Newton downward, have, by a wonderful concurrence of opinion, named as the year in which Popery is to receive its death-blow."

Do Christ this one favor, for all his love to thee: love all his saints; even the poorest, the meanest, and the weakest, notwithstanding some slight differences in judgment. As the names of the children of Israel were graven on Aaron's breast-plate, so are the names of all God's saints engraven on the heart of Christ. Let them be likewise so on thine.—*Wilcox.*

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

A FEW JOTTINGS.

I. Return of Rev. Dr. Seiss.

Having been compelled by failing health to abandon his pulpit for a time, and having spent nearly a year in visiting the various portions of the old world, including Syria and Palestine, we believe that our readers will share the feelings of gratitude with which the fact of this brother's safe return, in improved health, has been received by his numerous friends. His tour included a wide range. He sailed from New York on the 20th of April, 1864; landed at Queenstown, Ireland; spent a month traversing the "Emerald Isle" and Scotland; another month in England; a third in France, Belgium, and Holland; a fourth in the mountains of Switzerland; and a fifth in visiting the various cities of Germany, and the localities of the great scenes of the Reformation. On the 1st of October he took ship from Trieste for Greece; from thence he visited Constantinople, Smyrna, and the ruins of Ephesus; and finally reached the Syrian coast, at Beirout, early in November, having touched upon numerous points rendered famous in history, in poetry, and in the most sacred of records. Forty days were spent by him in Syria, during which he visited all the most noted localities and ruins in that wonderful and ever-memorable land: Baalbec's magnificent temples, whose builders are unknown; Damascus, with its beautiful river and historic interest; the Lebanons, and Hermon, and Tabor, and Gerezim, in their lofty heights and sacred grandeur; the Jordan, from its sources at Hasbiaye, Banias, and Dan, to Merom, Tiberias, and the Dead Sea; and Kadesh, Safed, Capernaum, Magdala, Nazareth, Jezreel, Dothan, Samaria, Sheckem, Shiloh, Bethel, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Bethany, Joppa, and Jericho, were all among the many things of absorbing interest inspected by him in his Eastern journeyings. At the place last named he was attacked with the fever peculiar to the climate, in consequence of which he was detained some ten days in Jerusalem, and subsequently some four weeks with extreme illness in London. But, with all, he has returned to his family and Church in safety, and with the prospect of a thorough re-establishment of health. Thanks to God for the numerous mercies of His good providence!

Dr. Seiss' pen was not idle during his absence. His contributions to our Serial, as well as to the weekly paper of his Church, have been regular and constant. But he now returns to his post with new interest and vigor, and well furnished, beyond any previous time, to interest and edify our readers. The Prophetic Times, though it did not suffer by his absence, has the hope of gaining much by his return. God bless him, and his labors, and make this publication a blessing in his hands!

II. Recent Millenarian Publications.

We have learned, through a friend in Toronto, Canada West, that *Messrs. Chewett & Co.*, of that place, have been prevailed on to republish that remarkable little book, called "*Napoleon III., The Man of Prophecy;* or, the Revival of the French Emperorship anticipated from the Necessity of Prophecy. By G. S. Faber, B. D.," author of the "Sacred Calendar of Prophecy," &c. As long ago as the year 1818, Mr. Faber predicted the revival of the French Emperorship on purely prophetic grounds; and the arguments which led him to this unlikely conclusion, since so remarkably fulfilled, are contained in this book, which well deserves the perusal and devout consideration of all those who would be thoroughly posted as to the times in which we are living. It is a small volume, of about one hundred pages, and was republished in this country by the Appletons, New York, 1859; but it had for some time been out of print. It is a good service, therefore, which *Messrs. Chewett & Co.* have rendered in issuing another edition. We have mislaid the copy sent us for notice, and cannot give the price. Address *Messrs. Chewett & Co.*, Toronto, Canada West.

Digitized by Google

We have also received a copy of a small work, printed by King & Baird, of this city, and dedicated to the Editors of the Prophetic Times, whom the author describes as "learned and devoted clergymen, of different denominations, uniting in the bonds of the brotherhood of Christ, for the purposes of teaching and exhorting on the subject of the second coming of our Lord." The book bears the title: "*The Crisis, in the History of Man, and in the Dispensations of God.*" Its author is Mr. W. H. Trenwith, 423 Pine Street, Philadelphia, though his name does not appear on the title-page. We give his address, that those wishing to send for the work may know where to direct. It is composed of two hundred pages, 12mo. The price we have not ascertained; neither have we had time to examine the book with critical care. We notice, however, that it treats the Apocalypse after the style of Dr. Elliot and others, who look to the history of the past for the fulfilments of many predictions which we regard as yet future.

We have also to announce two or three Tracts now in press, which will be issued by the time this reaches our readers. One is a Discourse by Dr. Seiss, entitled "*Our Dead,*" preached a few Sundays since in commemoration of those in his congregation who departed this life during his absence; another is a Discourse by Dr. McCaul, entitled "*The Blessed Hope,*" a powerful brochure on the fundamental character of the doctrine of Christ's return and reign, and the indispensableness of a prayerful longing for Christ's return to true Christian character; the third is a Tract by Rev. J. C. Ryle, entitled "WATCH." *A word in season;* a most pointed, convincing, and moving little treatise on the Parable of the Ten Virgins. Either or all of these three pamphlets may be had by addressing "*Prophetic Times,*" *P. O. Box* 2245, *Philadelphia, Pa.* If due encouragement should be given, it is expected to follow them with others of like character on other aspects of the same great theme. They are printed at private risk and expense, simply out of desire to spread the truth, to which so many are so dead.

For prices, see third page of cover.

III.—OUR SERIAL IN ENGLAND.

Our friends in this country will be glad to learn that the Prophetic Times is making friends on the other side of the Atlantic, and that the demand for it there is increasing. We notice that many of our original articles are copied in the leading journals devoted to prophetic subjects in Great Britain, and usually with notes of commendation. We insert, with pleasure, the communication from a new friend in Lancashire, and thank him heartily for his interest in endeavoring to increase the circulation of our issues. There are many influential believers in our doctrines in the British dominions, whose help we shall be delighted to secure. The following is the letter to which we refer:

HALLIWELL, BOLTON,
LANCASHIRE, ENGLAND, March 5, 1865.

Last November I ordered, through Messrs. Seeley & Co., 54 Fleet Street, London, the back numbers for 1863–4 of The Prophetic Times. I have recently received and read them to January of the present year. I am delighted with the Christian spirit which breathes through all of them, and fervently pray that they may be a blessing to thousands, to the praise and glory of God's name through the knowledge of His dear Son. Being convinced that they ought to be circulated as widely as possible, I have by this post, as a *commencement*, ordered through my booksellers, whose name I have mentioned above, two dozen copies for the present year. I shall get subscribers for these, and for as many more as I can, and I trust to be able shortly to double my order. My object in writing this is, to suggest that every minister of Christ, looking for, watching for, longing for the speedy advent of the Master—whether in or out of Great Britain—should endeavor to obtain subscribers for The Prophetic Times, which seems to me to bring the subject before its readers fully, yet concisely and practically.

If you like to let this letter appear, you are welcome to do so, and some clergymen may feel disposed to follow the example of, my dear sir,

Yours, faithfully and affectionately,

T. A. LINDON.

ST. PETER'S PARSONAGE.

Digitized by Google

A TALK WITH OUR READERS ABOUT COMMON THINGS.

CHOICE BITS OF THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

(*Conclusion.*)

To complete our hasty sketches of the demon teachings, let us take up, at random, one or two of the "*spiritual*" *newspapers* published in our large cities. Here are two numbers, bearing (as usual in "spiritual" phraseology) pompous, pretentious, and deceptive titles, indicative of promised "regeneration of society." They are well printed, and they are edited with ability. Here is the "Herald of Progress" ("not given to one idea"), published in New York. By its motto, it professes to be "Devoted to the discovery and application of Truth," *i. e.*, demon teachings. The first square contains italicized notices to Writers and Readers; the last of which is: "We are earnestly laboring to pulverize all sectarian creeds, and to fraternize the spiritual affections of mankind. Will you work with us?" By this time our readers begin to recognize the dragon dialect: "Fraternize the spiritual affections of mankind" smacks unmistakably of demonism.

We find a column of "Whisperings to Correspondents." (The Bible warns us against those who peep and mutter, wizards that have familiar spirits. Is. 8:19.) One of them is to H. S. C., Harveysburg, Ohio: "Open thy heart, dear friend, to the gentle influences of the Summer Land, and the angels" (demons) "will bring thee the sacred blessing of peace" (to wit, a diabolic conscience). "Whether thy poetic inspiration appears in these columns or not, those gone before have heard thy prayer, and will answer. 'Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.'"

Here is another column, entitled "The Spirits' Mysteries," with the wicked motto: "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." They teach that the apostolic spiritual gifts were "clairvoyant and mediumistic capabilities." The Bible is their "very good friend" when they can wrest it so as to seem to favor their diabolism. In "Notes by the Way," is the following: "Mr. and Mrs. Willis are doing much for the children" (to make them infidels), "by preaching to them a natural gospel revealed in buds, blossoms, rocks, and waterfalls." "Laura is, in very truth, a missionary,—teaching, by her mediumship, a Divine Brotherhood, and a holy Sisterhood. May the gods grant her length of days!"

"A Student" continues his "Peep into the Canon of Inspiration." "If he treats his subject with freedom, it must be remembered that 'idolatry' is more effectually combated by ridicule than by persecution." A column headed "The Physician," has the impudence to take the motto, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

In an article headed, "How not to prove it," the following occurs: "The Scriptures, taken collectively, do not claim to come from God,—do not even claim to be *one* book..... Now, if the facts alleged in Scripture are, in many cases, not facts,—the doctrines often false,—the precepts frequently palpably immoral," (oh, shame! where is thy blush?) "the utterances of emotion, in repeated instances, shocking,—what shall prevent our saying that these blemishes are not only fatal to the Divine origin of the several passages in which they occur, but fatal likewise to the book being taken indiscriminately as authority."

In a piece entitled "Too Fast *v.* Too Slow," we find a paragraph that reminds one of the old proverb *fas est et ab hoste doceri.* An aged clergyman speaks: "Sir, I have been preaching gospel regeneration these forty years. The only way I know of" (for regenerating men), "is for men to repent, and live pure lives." "Oh! that's all out of date. Why, now-a-days, a man can become a Christian in thirty seconds by the watch. It don't change his life at all. He can cheat and gamble in politics and lotteries, and lie himself into office, just as well. The parson does up the piety now-a-days, and all that a fashionable sinner has to do is to sign the paper,—creeds, I believe they call them,—pay his quarterage, and he can get a free pass in the first-class trains to heaven, where he can pre-empt the first site for heavenly mansions; and realize for his lots in three days. That old idea of Pilgrim's Progress

Digitized by Google

is all down in the market, and won't pay ten cents on the dollar."

Not less significant is the obituary column, entitled nothing less than "Apotheosis;" with the motto, ☞ "Death is but a kind and welcome servant, who unlocks with noiseless hand life's flower-encircled door, to show us those we love." (The old-fashioned Bible denies this, saying that "the wages of *sin* is death.")

Thirty-four public lecturers on "spiritualism," announced appointments in various Northern States. Of these, at least fourteen are women, and three are Reverends. In an article headed, "Biblical Claims in open Court," this paragraph occurs: "This book asserts of God that He at *divers* and *sundry times favored*, and *even commanded, deception, fraud, polygamy, slavery, murder, circumcision, revenge*, and *persecution of man by man* for the sake of religion; and also affirms of God that he subjected the race to a fall, involving its ruin, and has continually treated it since that event as if it were fallen." From "A Peep into the Canon of Inspiration," we can find room for the following only: "This chapter (Gen. 18th), as well as that of Exodus 23 and 33, shows conclusively that the imaginary God of the Jews—called Jehovah—was no other than a Samson, Goliah, a species of giant, with a visible physical body, like an ordinary human being." We ask the indulgence of our readers for such an exhibition.

From the long list of advertised works on "spiritualism," seventy-eight in number, we extract the following titles:

"Thirty-two Wonders; or, the *Skill* displayed in the Miracles of Jesus."

"The Philosophy of Creation," by the spirit of Thomas Paine. A new, improved, cheap edition.

"Whatever is, is Right."

"Love and Mock Love; or, How to Marry to the end of Conjugal Satisfaction."

"Further Communications from the World of Spirits, by Joshua, Solomon, and others."

"The Ministry of Angels *Realized*."

"My Experience; or, the Footprints of a Presbyterian to Spiritualism."

"Spirit Intercourse: Incidents of Personal Experience."

"Natty, a Spirit; his Portrait and his Life."

"Discourses from the Spirit World. By Rev. R. P. Wilson, medium. Dictated by Stephen Olin."

"Twelve Messages from the Spirit of John Quincy Adams, through Joseph D. Stiles, medium."

"The Mistake of Christendom; or, Jesus and his Gospels before Paul and Christianity."

Let us now take up a number of the "Banner of Light," printed in Boston. Passing over a good deal of matter similar to the preceding quotations, we shall select only a few passages. In this paper, no less than one hundred and thirty-six lecturers on "spiritualism," are advertised. Of these, sixty-four are women, five are physicians, and six are clergymen, including Rev. John Pierpont. Twelve of the women have "Miss" prefixed to the name. There are, also, advertisements from twelve "medical trance mediums," who prescribe for diseases, or communicate messages from any dead person, from whom friends wish to hear. Ten of these are females, and four of the number are single.

The leading article in this paper is entitled, "*Look for Changes.*" It says that "the new Revolution is at our very doors. The very air is full of the notes of preparation. All seem to feel it,—to be aware of the impending revolution. The revolution, after having made its way thoroughly, and beyond dislodgement, into the body of the State, must very soon return with vastly increased power to do its work within the Church. Now has, at length, dawned the day when the discussions shall bear fruit, forty, fifty, and an hundred-fold. The old Church will stand out just as stubbornly as it has always done. But they *will* go down."

"*To our Friends.*" This piece says, *inter alia*, "Nothing is more plain than the fact, that our country's destinies are now turning on that very hinge which has been wrought out of the progressive philosophy."

Nearly a whole page is taken up with communications from various ghosts of dead men. They are highly interesting, as showing the

Digitized by Google

animus of demonism; but we have room for one specimen only. A spirit who professes to be one William Fletcher, a quondam circus employee, aged 31, killed by a fall, and rather illiterate, says, writes, or rather raps out: "It's a long road, this coming back here. There are so many crooks in it, you don't know where you are going to, till you get to the next one. . . . . The old lady may be shocked at my coming back to tell her her religion is good for nothing; but it's the truth. My father has been here a great while; but he is not any better off than I am, and he was no better off than I was when I got here." (It seems that the "progression" did not work in this case, somehow; and we fear there are a good many others like it, and *more things behind.*)

The "Boston Spiritualistic Conference," of that date, was occupied solely with the attempt to prove (to themselves) that "The facts of modern spiritualism are in perfect harmony with the facts of the Bible, and furnish the strongest and most positive evidence extant of the 'spiritual' reign of that book." Of a truth, it *does* fulfil some of its prophecies. But it is thus that the satyr blows both hot and cold; and the miserable dupes of lies in hypocrisy speak similar lies themselves, deceiving, and being deceived. The whole piece would be a curiosity for our readers; but we cannot quote the numerous speakers, and will content ourselves with noting that the "Rev. Mr. Tyrrell" said: "Before I was made acquainted with the facts of modern 'spiritualism,' the Bible was to me an enigma; but 'spiritualism' proved just the key to unlock it, and make it perfectly plain to my mind. I found the phenomena of the Bible miracles, and of the nineteenth century—'spiritualism'—to be one and the same thing."

But our last quotation shall cap the climax: it spits venom at us and our readers, not to mention One that is greater. "The advocates of this theory have, of course, no faith in human progress, except in the backward, downward way, to where the most of all past generations have tumbled off the shores of time into the bottomless pit of perdition. They hold that 'the world is waxing worse and worse,' and the only hope of the favored few—an infinitesimal number of saints, who are yet to 'inherit the earth'—is in 'the speedy coming of the Lord,' who, erst 'the Lamb of God' that was to 'take away the sin of the world,' is about to show himself as 'the lion of the tribe of Judah;' that is, the Spirit of Divine vengeance in the vision of old prophets, 'treading down the wicked, and trampling them in his fury.' The 'followers of the Lamb,' *alias* Lion, do not expect to be happy till their enemies are thus destroyed."

The two spiritualist papers from which we have been quoting are selected at random, and are fair specimens of their class.

Here we rest the case; and we now leave it to the candor of our Christian readers to pronounce judgment on the nature of "spiritualism," and its origin in the pit. And we ask them whether it is not proved that that system of seducing spirits, of whom the Holy Spirit speaketh *expressly*, is among us; and whether it does not follow that we are now living in the latter times, and that the coming of the Lord, in its first stage at least, is at the very door, and may take place at any moment.

This moral miasm has overspread all Christendom. In its most active form, it is found in the United States; but it has no less strong a hold on England and the Continent. Prominent men, like Bulwer and others, are its votaries. But the headquarters are at Paris. Let every one draw his own inference. Reflecting on this still partially-undeveloped latter-day enormity, we say, with the ancient stanza:

> "Whoso him bethoft,
> Inwardly and oft,
> How hard it were to flit
> From the grave into the pit;
> From the pit into pain,
> And ne'er come out again,
> He would not do one sin
> All the world to win."

Beware of "spiritualism!" From the snare of "spiritualism," good Lord, deliver us! From fellowship with demons, preserve us, gracious Lord and God!

"Spiritualism" has, to an entirely unprece-

Digitized by Google

dented degree, opened and *popularized* intercourse with the unseen world. It has paved the road for the most radical political and ecclesiastical changes; and the way is made easy for the next step, viz., demon-alliance, demon-miracles, and the manifestation and rule of Antichrist. And not this only. The *Christian world*, having so persistently derided "spiritualism," will, in its blindness, say, *when Satan and his angels shall have been cast out into the earth*, that this is only a repetition of the old effete *legerdemain of spiritualism*, and so be thrown off its guard.

The following extract from the "Last Vials" is worthy of the most careful perusal, and contains the exact truth:

"Not one individual, more or less, shall be taken up without passing the gates of death. The appointed number will be made up from among living men, at the appointed time. When that appointed number of living men has been completed, then the time of *Birth* will have arrived. The child (Rev. 12) will be born, and will, instantly, be caught up to God, and to his throne. In passing from earth to heaven, the manchild will necessarily pass through the camp of Satan and his angels, who now inhabit and fill 'the heavenly places.' (Eph. 6.) In passing through the centre of the Satanic army, the manchild will be exposed, of necessity, to a furious attack from Satan and his angels. Michael and his angels will come to the aid of the saints, and the great battle so audaciously anticipated by Milton, yet so magnificently described, will be fought. The army of Satan—the third part of the host of heaven—will be defeated, driven headlong from the regions above, and forced to retreat upon the earth. Satan and his angels have, from an unknown time, inhabited the heavenly places, the region of the stars, and the outskirts of heaven itself. From thence they have made incessant inroads upon the earth, 'walking up and down in the earth, and going to and fro therein.' But with the infinite expanse of the heavens before them, they have been infinitely less violent than they will be hereafter, when shut up within the limits of this one globe. Their fury will be greater when shut up within the earth, in proportion as their range of action will be less. And this will constitute that period of unspeakable woe foretold in the Revelation: 'Woe to the inhabiters of the earth, and of the sea; for the Devil hath come down to you, having great wrath.'

"The Dragon having been cast down into the earth, the earth will become a complete den of evil spirits; and this last state of the world will be sevenfold worse than the first. The world is boasting that it has cast out its evil spirits, and that it is 'ready, swept, and garnished' for a perpetual holiday! What with philosophers, lecturers, public speakers, peace societies, and religious small-talk, the world is swept every morning as regularly as the streets. Philosophers sweep it clean, and itinerant orators garnish it with all the flowers of rhetoric. But the world, like the streets, becomes 'unclean' again, and nothing but the tide of Divine power will be sufficient to cleanse the Augean heap. Yet it thinks itself 'ready, swept, and garnished' for a feast, when in reality sunk in mire; and no sooner shall the Devil be cast down into the earth, than the last state of mankind shall be worse than any that went before. Instead of one evil spirit, it will be possessed by seven. Every evil passion of discord, hatred, revenge, and cupidity, will be let loose. All the wicked spirits who once filled the enormous concave of the heavens will then be shut up within one spot. All the infernal energy which once spread out throughout infinite space will then be contracted to one point. The superhuman power that once wasted its activity among the regions of the stars will be compressed within the compass of the earth. The recoil of the spring is in proportion to its compressure; and the recoil of the evil spirits against mankind will be sevenfold more terrible than before. Who can form a conception of those approaching times? The earth become the den of the Fallen Angels—the air filled with them—the waters agitated by their restless force—'the sea and the waves roaring' at their impulse—the powers of heaven shaken by their wrath. The whole system of things will become suddenly SUPERNATURAL. It will no longer be nature, but something above nature;

Digitized by Google

and all those long-established principles which mankind have learned from the experience of ages—all those rules of life which are founded upon the natural course of things, will be instantly subverted by the entrance of a SUPERNATURAL ELEMENT; and a new supernatural rule of life must be constructed on the instant. A new experience must be gained, when there will be no time in which to gain it. The laws by which men were guided, while they dealt only with the natural, will be useless for their guidance when they have to encounter the supernatural. Society and science will be thrown equally into confusion, and the 'perplexity' foretold in the prophetic discourse of our Lord will be exactly realized.

"If ever 'perplexity' was felt by mankind it will be when the *supernatural* element has suddenly supervened upon the *natural*, and when all the principles of experience, and the maxims of life must be instantly changed or thrown aside, in order to deal with the new element introduced;—when Nature will no longer be a guide, and when the science of *supernaturalism* shall still be an unknown thing. The perplexity of all mankind will be as great as the perplexity of a man transferred from the earth to some distant planet; and it will not only be a physical perplexity, but, far worse, it will be a *moral* one.

"This word 'perplexity' is well deserving of notice. It is generally looked upon as nothing more than an ordinary term intended to express the ordinary difficulties of a disturbed period. But it seems to indicate much more than this. In the original Greek, the sentence runs thus: 'And upon earth distress of nations in *perplexity:*' That is to say, 'On earth the nations shall be distressed *by* perplexity.' This construction, which is the most liberal one, is much more expressive than our common translation, in which the 'distress of nations' and the 'perplexity' are made two separate things. They are really one thing; they run one into the other: the 'distress' is caused by the 'perplexity.' And what is the cause of this 'perplexity?' Why is it so emphatically pointed out? Because of the extraordinary circumstances of the case.

"For this extraordinary crisis the Devil is now preparing, with proportionate activity. He has long ago undermined the foundations of Divine truth, by the introduction of 'SPIRITUALIZING INTERPRETATION.' The nominal Christian Church *glories* in spiritualizing interpretation. It looks upon it as the height of spiritual attainment; while, all the time, it is nothing more than the 'tares' which the enemy has sown. From whence but from the Father of Lies has it come that all the magnificent promises made to the Jews, and to the earth, have been wrested from their design, and applied to the Church? and that Church not the true Church of Christ, but an imaginary thing, made up of professors of every description,—a Church established by man, and carried on by external human mechanism. From whence but from the Father of Lies has it come that the Kingdom of Heaven, which means the reign of Christ over the earth, is now understood to mean nothing more than the rude, imperfect, feeble Christianity, which we find scattered here and there over the world? The consequence will be, that when Satan has been driven down—into the earth—when a supernatural era has begun, the Christian world will be completely bewildered. Having long ago spiritualized away all the miraculous part of Scripture, it has now nothing to fall back upon but the ordinary course of things. Yet the ordinary course of things will be altogether insufficient to explain the *phenomena* of that era. By the practice of '*spiritualizing*,' the edge of the sword has been thoroughly *blunted*, so that it is no longer capable of dealing with extraordinary antagonists, or with any but the ordinary difficulties of human life. Take this example: The 'Casting-down of Satan' has been '*spiritualized*' to mean the downfall of Roman Paganism, according to some; or the downfall of some particular heresy, according to others. Now, let us ask this question: When the Devil and his angels have been driven down from heaven, and let loose upon the earth, how can they be met and encountered with scriptural arms, when one Gospel minister tells you that the 12th Revelation applies to the time of Constantine the Great; and another tells you that it refers to the overthrow of Arianism or Gnos-

Digitized by Google

ticism; while both of them piously shrink away from all idea of *Liberal* interpretation, and tell you that the whole is 'spiritual,' and has been long ago fulfilled? Oh, the artifice of Satan! You now see how he has blunted the sword of the Spirit, which is 'the Word of God.' He has blunted the Spirit by means of 'spiritualism.' He has employed the false metal to shatter the edge of the *true* metal. Be assured of this,—that when the hour of peril comes, the ministers of the Gospel will be found bewildered and unarmed. Their swords blunted, their armor too slight for the weapons of the enemy, and their minds utterly confused by the undreamt-of introduction of supernatural machinery. The mischief is now irreparable, and the penalty of 'spiritualizing' must be paid. But this we say, that the time will come when the 'spiritualizing' system of interpretation will be found and pronounced by all to be an invention of the Father of Lies, and all but the RUIN of Christianity. As the enemy has invented 'spiritualizing,' so has he also invented 'SPIRITUALISM,' another preparative for the future. Whether the spirit-manifestations of the day are real or fictitious, it makes no difference. In either case, they equally answer the design of the inventor. *Men are becoming thoroughly familiarized with supernatural agencies*, and with supernatural ideas; but they are familiarized only with those of the *Satanic* kind. Observe the righteous judgments of God! The world has rejected altogether the Supernaturalism of Scripture; and it has been allowed to take up the supernaturalism of the *Devil*. Christendom will admit no supernaturalism in prophecy; and it has been allowed to take up supernaturalism in daily life. Millions of men are led away after spirit manifestations, and have become thoroughly apostate. But there are millions more who renounce 'spiritualism,' and yet are seriously affected by it. They have become so familiarized with the reports of spiritual agency, that they have lost all feeling as to its existence. When the Devil is cast down—when he shall begin to work in real earnest—the religious world will only *laugh* at his *earliest* operations. It will say, 'This is the old nonsense of table-turning, spirit-rapping, and electrobiology over again.' It will be thrown off its guard, turn aside with contempt, and find itself enveloped by the enemy, while it is laughing at the very operations which are designed for its destruction. In a word, the Devil is carrying out at this day the fable of 'The Shepherd-boy and the Wolf,' a fable which is simple enough for every child's spelling-book, and yet deep enough for the study of the Prince of Darkness, and for the submersion of the unbelieving world. The Devil has, therefore, two distinct agencies by which he is preparing the world for his immediate, and, perhaps, visible presence, 'spiritualizing' and 'spiritualism.' By 'spiritualizing' he has destroyed the power and beauty of Scripture, as far as they can be destroyed. By 'spiritualism,' he has hardened mankind against all future displays of Satanic energy, as far as mankind can be hardened against such displays. 'Spiritualizing' acts upon the religious world, and 'spiritualism' acts on the profane one."

Beware of "spiritualism!" Come out from it, and be separate! Abstain from identifying yourself with it in the remotest manner! Touch not the unclean thing, lest the Great Tribulation should overwhelm you likewise, and you be found among the number of those impenitent and hardened sinners of whom it is written (Rev. 9), "The rest of the men which were *not* killed by these plagues, yet repented not of the works of their hands, *that they should not worship devils* and *idols* of gold and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood; which can neither see, nor hear, nor walk; neither repented they of their *murders*, nor of their *sorceries*, nor of their *fornications*, nor of their *thefts*." From which pandemonium, from which hell on earth, may God, in his infinite mercy, deliver us, and all who read these words!

"WITHOUT the cloud and gloom appear,
The peril and the storm are near,
The foe is raging round;
Then let me boldly enter in,
There end my danger, fear, and sin,
And rest on holy ground."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. JUNE, 1865. No. 6.

Special Contributions.

SMYRNA AND EPHESUS.

NOTES OF TRAVEL.

BY J. A. SEISS, D.D.

THE morning of the 25th of October last, found us safely anchored in the beautiful and excellent harbor of Smyrna, the second city in Turkey, once the home of the sainted Polycarp, and one of those seven cities of Asia, whose names were spoken by the Saviour long after his ascension to heaven. Though we had two sets of custom-house officers to pay and pass, it was not long till we had found lodgings, our first in Asia. Like all these Eastern cities, Smyrna is characterized by small, incommodious houses, strung along narrow, crooked, irregular, and dirty streets. It has about 150,000 inhabitants, largely Greek, but profusely intermingled with people of all nations, languages, complexions, religions, and fashions on earth, and all with their several peculiarities intact. It does not seem so much like a city, as a sort of regathering, after these many thousands of years, of the scattered population of Babel, for the purpose of building a city. And if the time should ever come when they shall learn to understand each other, they will, no doubt, succeed in accomplishing this end. Smyrna is the great commercial centre of the Levant, from which ships distribute to all countries. It is also being invested with a system of railroads, sending out their iron arms into the interior of Asia, to gather to it the riches of the fertile lands, which now lie almost desolate behind it.

Though Smyrna is the only one of the seven cities addressed in the Apocalypse, which has retained anything of its ancient importance, it has but few remains of antiquity. Almost interminable caravans of asses and camels—a peculiar Asiatic institution—may be seen visiting it now as of old. The hills and the sea, the clear atmosphere, the bright, hot noons, and the beautiful sunsets, are the same as presented themselves to the beholder two thousand years ago. Some portions of the ruins of the Acropolis are from the times of Macedonian and Ionian glory. There are also a few old tombs, among which is one called the tomb of Polycarp. Beside these, we observed nothing antedating the era of Turkish dominion, though our guide pointed out an old convent as "one of the seven churches of Asia." One day devoted to Smyrna quite satisfied us, both as to the past and present. The remains of another city, forty miles distant, interested us much more.

It was early in the morning of the 26th that we set out on our intended visit to Ephesus, a city full of interest to every Christian. We reached it by rail from Smyrna, in about three hours and a half, through an exceedingly beautiful and fertile plain, skirted on both sides with broken hills and mountains. We spent most of the day in riding among its old ruins, which line the plains and hills and mountain sides of a vast area, and lose themselves in the expanse they formerly filled with their glory. The Saviour once directed it to be written to the church of Ephesus, "I will come unto thee quickly, and I will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:5).

Digitized by Google

We found it *without a human inhabitant*, so far as the city proper is concerned, and enveloped in the pestilential desolation and darkness of death. Great lizards were darting about over the immense fallen columns of porphyry and marble; the owls peered at us with strained eyes from the dark crevices of fragmentary Cyclopean walls, and malaria, silence, and gloom brooded over what was once proudly styled "the first of the cities," with which are connected the names of some of the greatest of earth, in wealth and wisdom, religion and literature, arts and arms. Even the glorious temple of its great Goddess, Diana, can no longer be identified with certainty. Two piles of colossal ruins are each claimed as its remains, and we picked blackberries in both of them. The vast theatre, the greatest ever constructed, which, in apostolic times, and as a result of apostolic teachings, rang with the voices of hardened avaricious thousands, who, "all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!'" still shows its vast outlines of walls and arches; but the old wild bushes are gnarled about its heavy masonry, and the camel was browsing in its forsaken aisles as we rode through it. And the Great Agora, where the exchanges of a renowned metropolis were conducted, we saw transmuted into an uninclosed tobacco field, green, weedy, and unattended!

And yet, next to Jerusalem, these ruins are perhaps the most intensely interesting in the world. They have a classic interest scarcely surpassed by Athens, and connect with events and memories of sacred history and tradition, to which the sympathizer with apostles and their labors will ever and anon recur with a thoughtful and solemn heart. Here Paul had often been. With the builders or frequenters of these houses, now in ruins, he had often mingled, and to them he had often preached. Here he laid hands on certain disciples of John, confirming them in the true faith, and conferring upon them the gifts of the Holy Ghost, by means of which they prophesied, and spoke in tongues which they had never learned. Here he wrought many "special miracles," healing the sick and casting out demons, even with "handkerchiefs and aprons" which he had touched. Here he gained his glorious triumph over the exorcists and magicians, who finally "brought together their books, and burned them before all men," the price of which was "fifty thousand pieces of silver;" about $25,000. Here he wrote his first epistle to the Corinthians. Here, for two years, he had had his home, coveting no man's silver or gold or apparel, but ministering with his own hands to his necessities, and to them that were with him, and debated and taught daily in the gymnasium of Tyrannus, till "all Asia" had tidings of the truth as it is in Jesus, and the frightened silversmiths assembled in boisterous meetings to save their craft from the power of his arguments against the alleged Divinity of Diana, or the worshipfulness of her shrines. Hither he sent, in his journey down the Archipelago, for the elders to meet him at Miletus, where he rehearsed to them his manner of life in Ephesus, and gave them his affectionate farewell charge. And to the ancient dwellers here he addressed from his prison at Rome one of those masterly epistles of his, which forms an important part of the New Testament.

Here, also, had lived the apostle John, whose ashes somewhere mingle with these ruins. Here he wrote his second and third epistles. Here, also, very likely, repose the remains of the blessed Mary, who, after the crucifixion of her divine Son, became a part of the family charge of this beloved disciple. Here, also, had the eloquent Apollos been converted to Christ, and first exercised his gifts in the Gospel's interest. Here, too, had the beloved Timothy lived and discharged the functions of his sacred bishopric, conferred upon him through apostolic hands; and here, also, he died, and was entombed. Here, too, had Justin, the martyr, held his famous debate with Trypho, setting forth the characteristics of the Christian faith. And here the great Church council was held, which condemned the error of Nestorius.

It would be wrong, in any way, to mingle with these facts and incidents of sacred history the fables and fancies which appear in the mythic accounts of Ephesus. Yet they are not without interest, and serve to show in what re-

Digitized by Google

verent estimate the Ephesians held their city. According to these stories, which formed part of the religious faith of the people, which may have originated in some sort of historic facts, it was here that Latona successfully betook herself for an asylum, and that Apollo and Diana were born. It was here that Syrinx underwent that wonderful metamorphose, and that Pan had his favorite lurking-place. It was here that Bacchus contended with the Amazons, and that Hercules overcame them. It was here, from the summit of Solmissus, that Juno watched the Curetean arms, until she was deafened by their terrible clangor. And it was here that Apollo found refuge from the vengeance of Jupiter, after having imbrued his hands in the life-blood of the Cyclops.

It is also affirmed that, when the Greeks first emigrated to these regions, an oracle told that a fish should direct their way, and a wild boar conduct them. Nor does the story fail to tell how this prophecy was fulfilled. As they were one day preparing for dinner on the shores of the sacred port, a broiling fish leaped from the fire, with a live coal in its mouth. The dry bushes of a thicket were set on fire by it; and out of the thicket sprang a boar, which they pursued along the mountain side, and killed on the spot where the temple of Minerva was afterwards built; thus determining their settlement in Ephesus. These, and other like myths, contributed to invest the place with peculiar sanctity in the eyes of those who believed them. And, even in the light which teaches how to rate them, we can hardly refer to them without feeling a sort of charm going out from them to heighten our interest in Ephesus and its ruins. Without doubt it was a great and glorious city, whatever contributed to make it so. It is now a city of complete desolation, whose very atmosphere is poison, and whose only living tenants are things unclean and vile. It is a vast and solemn memorial to the judgments of the Almighty upon a people unfaithful to their privileges, and neglectful of the Divine behests. Alas! it is to be feared that this is not the only Ephesus; and that, for like reasons, like judgments even now impend over cities in both hemispheres, which are thinking only of increased greatness. May the Lord be gracious, and keep His people steadfast unto eternal life!

THE ABOMINATION WHICH MAKETH DESOLATE.

PAUL writes to Timothy: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." But Scripture can only be *profitable* when rightly understood, and properly interpreted. There are many portions of the word of God which lie like precious pearls at the bottom of the sea, of no particular benefit to man. In fact, more than one-half of the Bible is often regarded as so profoundly mysterious, that it is thought presumptuous even to attempt to bring it out for use in instruction.

This is, perhaps, the more true with respect to those portions of the word of God which relate to the doctrine of the Saviour's personal advent, and the signs and circumstances to attend that blessed event. And yet there is no more mystery in the predictions concerning the second advent of Christ, than in those which foretold the first; whilst we have the fulfilment of the prophecies of the first to guide us in the proper interpretation of the prophecies of the second. The prophecies relating to the first advent were all *literally* fulfilled, according to the plain reading of the word, and we are bound to believe that the prophecies relating to the second advent will be fulfilled in the same manner; that is, *literally*.

"*The abomination of desolation*," spoken of by the Saviour, in Matthew 24:15, is one of those things in Holy Scripture which have puzzled many Bible readers and commentators, and has been often the most absurdly construed. We think it just as plain as any other portion of the word of God.

Campbell, in his critical notes, says, "Nothing is more commonly understood in the language of Scripture, by '*abomination*,' than *idols*." Olshausen says, "The most consistent hypothesis is, that the *profanation* of the temple by *idolatrous worship* is the pheno-

Digitized by Google

menon alluded to." And yet, strange to say, that both these exponents, with nearly all our English commentators, have labored to make it appear that the profanation of the temple here spoken of occurred at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans under Titus. But the facts will not admit of this application. "The abomination of desolation" is expressly said to be "*in the holy place*," *i. e.* the temple. But we are told that the temple was burned while the Romans were entering the city, and hence "the abomination" could not have been set up by them. And if the Romans had even set up their banners with their eagles in the temple, this could still not have been "'the abomination of desolation' spoken of by Daniel," to which the Saviour refers, because that "abomination" is to be an *image* or idol. And when the Romans entered the city of Jerusalem there was no *universal* tribulation, such as is predicted to occur when this "abomination of desolation" will be set up. The tribulation at that time was felt only in the land of Palestine. It is also expressly stated that, "*immediately after*" the great tribulation which shall occur under "the abomination of desolation," "the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." And to say that this coming of the Son of man was the coming of the Roman armies is ridiculous, and borders strongly on downright blasphemy. It certainly had no more reference to the coming of the Roman armies to destroy Jerusalem than to General Sherman's march through Georgia. It is expressly said that the coming of the Son of man shall take place "*immediately after*," and not *before*, the setting up of "the abomination of desolation." The tribulation attending "'the abomination of desolation,' '*shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time;*' '*such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.* And except those days' of that tribulation '*should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved:*'" this desolation is general, and of course includes *all flesh, all nations of the earth.*

And all this was revealed to Daniel, the prophet, as taking place, not at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, but "*in the time of the end, and of the resurrection.*" In the ninth chapter and twenty-seventh verse of Daniel, we are told that "he" (Antichrist) "shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (seven years), and *in the midst* of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of *abominations*, he shall make it *desolate; even until the consummation.*" In the eleventh chapter and thirty-first verse, we read, "And arms shall stand on his" (Antichrist's) "part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and *shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.*" In the twelfth chapter, and eleventh and twelfth verses, we read, "*From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.* Blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." This is certainly very plain and definite language. And it is to this that the Saviour refers. And now, who does not see that this "abomination of desolation" could in no manner refer to the Roman armies and the destruction of Jerusalem, for the daily sacrifice was not taken away until the Romans had besieged the city. There were no "*thousand two hundred and ninety*" literal, spiritual, figurative, or any other kind of days, between the taking away of the daily sacrifice and the destruction of the temple. The Romans surrounded the city at the feast of the Passover, and after a siege of only *six months*, it was taken, the temple burnt, and its foundations ploughed up, so that literally not one stone was left upon another.

It is very clear that "the abomination of desolation" predicted by Daniel, and spoken of by the Saviour, has not yet been set up, and hence is yet future. Let us see, then, what light the Scriptures throw upon it to lead us to correct conclusions as to what this "abomination of desolation" will be, and when it will be set up.

The Scriptures tell us that, before the coming of the Son of man in power and great glory, the Jews, who have been scattered into all the

Digitized by Google

world, a byword and a reproach among all nations, sighing under God's scathing judgments for more than 1800 years, shall, at the fulness of the times of the Gentiles, be regathered to the land of their fathers, to some extent rebuild their city and temple, and restore their ancient services and sacrifices. All this will be under the auspices of some powerful, ruling monarch, who shall "confirm the covenant with many for one week." This monarch will, no doubt, for certain considerations agreed upon between the parties, obligate himself to protect the Jews in the peaceable possession of the land of Palestine, and assist them in rebuilding their temple, and restoring their ancient worship. And as the Jews claim that Mount Moriah, upon which now stands the Mahommedan mosque of Omar, is the only proper place for the offering of their sacrifices, it having been the consecrated mount where stood the famous temple of Solomon, this will, no doubt, be secured for them, and converted into a Jewish temple for the observance of their daily temple services.

But it is said, in the prophecy by Daniel, that in the midst of the week, that covenant shall be broken by him who made it with the Jews (9 : 27). "He shall work *deceitfully*," says the prophet, and "cause the sacrifice and the oblation" of the temple service to cease. Half of the time agreed upon in the covenant having expired, he shall, with the armies, march against Jerusalem, and abolish all the services, and cause an image or idol, probably of himself, to be placed in the temple, which every one will be compelled to worship under penalty of death. This ruler, whoever he may be, will be the *Antichrist* predicted by Daniel, the Saviour, Paul, and John. *This image or idol which he will then and there set up will be "the abomination of desolation,"* spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, "*standing in the holy place*" of the temple. This is "the abomination of desolation" to which the Saviour refers. This will be followed by the most bloody persecutions of the saints who refuse to worship the image. And this will be that dark and dreadful period which the Scriptures call "*the great tribuldtion*," and which, the Saviour says, will be "*such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.*"

The tribulation of Jerusalem's visitation was a type, but only a type, of the tribulation attending the setting up of "the abomination of desolation" by Antichrist. Jeremiah tells us that the same cup of which God compelled Jerusalem to drink, "all the nations" shall drink, "*even all the kingdoms of the world which are upon the face of the earth.*" (Jer. 25 : 15–33.) Josephus, who was an eye-witness to the dreadful scenes, gives a picture of what that cup contained. And if the type was thus dreadful, what will the antitype be?

Notice how the tribulation under Antichrist, when "the abomination of desolation" shall be set up, is described by the angel in the thirteenth chapter of Revelation. "And he" (Antichrist) "had power to give life unto the image of the beast" (an idol or image of himself which he will set up in the temple to be worshipped), "that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause *that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.* And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, *to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell,* save he that had the mark of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; *for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six.*"

This, also, is plain language. The angel says expressly that *the beast* that is to perform these wonders in and through this image which he will set up, is no beast, *but a man,*—some powerful, ruling monarch, who shall have power and control over the false prophet, so as to induce him to lend him all his influence and authority to execute all his antichristian purposes. And as he will set up an image of *the beast,* and the angel says, the beast *is a man,* it therefore naturally follows that it will be *an image of a man*—of himself, perhaps—that he will set up, and which he will compel all, upon pain of death, to worship. And the *man's* name numbers "*six hundred, threescore and six;*" and this *man will be the Antichrist* of Daniel,

Digitized by Google

who sets up "*the abomination of desolation*," "*in the time of the end and the resurrection.*"

It was customary among some of the Pagans to mark the right hand or forehead with some device, referring to the heathen deity they professed to worship. And this old custom, it seems, will be again introduced by Antichrist. All his subjects shall be marked. And when once the image is set up, and the test enforced, what multitudes will flock around the standard of the man of sin! With the present spirit of worldliness in the churches everywhere, how few would even now have faith in Christ strong enough to stand against this temptation, "which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth!" And just so it will be at that day, for the Saviour says, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" The great multitude, in order to be permitted to engage in business, will be willing to sacrifice their souls and all, and bow to "the abomination that maketh desolate," or submit to be marked in their hands or foreheads with the mark of Antichrist. The corrupt passions of the wicked will then be let loose; for Paul, in describing the coming of Antichrist, says, "And then shall that wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. *And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*" The wicked will then become desperate in their wickedness and oppression of the saints, and shall give themselves over with loose reins to deeds of bloodshed, carnage, and daring blasphemies against the God of heaven.

But, blessed be God, not all shall become gross idolaters and infidel blasphemers! In "the great tribulation," vast multitudes shall refuse to bow to the image, or receive the mark of the beast, and, for their faithfulness to Christ, shall fall by the sword or the flame; and this not only at Jerusalem, where the image shall be set up, but throughout the whole civilized world, wherever the dreadful conscription shall be enforced. It is a "*temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*" For John, in his apocalyptic visions, saw "*a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds and tongues and people,*" stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands, singing the song of victory over the beast. And when he inquired who they are, and whence they came, the angel answered, "*These are they which came out of the great tribulation,* and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." No, no.

> "Not from Jerusalem alone
> To heaven the path ascends;
> As near, as sure, as straight the way,
> That leads to the celestial day;
> From farthest realms extends,—
> Frigid or torrid zone."

This may be a dark picture of a still darker and more dreadful scene, but it has also a bright side. No matter how hot the fires through which the faithful of the Lord may be made to pass in their devotion to Christ, and no matter where or how they may be slain for their resistance of the mighty temptation, they will be blessed martyrs, yea, doubly blessed, even in their death. For no sooner will they have sacrificed their lives for the truth and honor of Christ, than they shall at once be raised and clothed in white, and stand before their almighty King in glory. For it is written, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. *Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth.*" From *when?* From the time that "the abomination of desolation" shall be set up, and the bloody sword of "the great tribulation" shall have been unsheathed for the slaughter of the saints of God, and the hour of the great temptation shall have commenced. And in what shall their peculiar blessedness consist? I answer, in this:

Digitized by Google

they shall have an *immediate resurrection*, and the high honor of standing before their Lord, and be among the happy number who shall attend him, when he comes in his great power and glory to overthrow Antichrist and all his infamous hosts.

But, oh! what horrors shall overtake those who worship the beast, and receive his mark! My soul trembles when I contemplate their doom. "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same *shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture*, into the cup of his indignation; *and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever: and they have no rest day nor right, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.*" *And "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*"

Let us, then, heed the solemn cantion of the Saviour, where he says, "*whoso readeth let him understand.*" We cannot be too serious and earnest in regard to these things. We ought to search the Scriptures continually to learn these things, as the Scriptures bring them before us. And the blessed Saviour and his apostles urge it upon us to watch, and to guard against being found asleep, and unprepared for the trying hour which certainly shall come. And may God help us to be watchful, that we may be kept from that "hour of temptation, which shall come on all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth!" J. F. F.

NAPOLEON'S NAME COUNTED IN ENGLISH.

If the number of the name of Antichrist or the man of sin be 666, why should we not find it in the language of the Anglo-Saxon or English, seeing that to this race is more especially committed the *whole* oracles of God, the Old and New Testaments with the Apocrypha, especially the *New* Testament, where only we find this remarkable prophecy. Why not be able to "*count* the number of his name" in any language in which we read the prophecy? The word of God is to those, also, who read *not* classics.

Here it is in plain English, in the shortest possible designation of his title which I can find words to express, viz.:

Louis or *Lewis Napoleon Buonaparte, French Emperor*, as follows:

L e w i s	
1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5	= 15
N a p o l e o n	
6 + 7 + 8 + 9 + 10 + 11 + 12 + 13	= 76
B u o n a p a r t e	
14 + 15 + 16 + 17 + 18 + 19 + 20 + 21 + 22 + 23	= 185
F r e n c h	
24 + 25 + 26 + 27 + 28 + 29	= 159
E m p e r o r	
30 + 31 + 32 + 33 + 34 + 35 + 36	= 231
Total, ...	666

You may possibly object to my adding *French Emperor* to his name, but you yourself call him thus, and I think, in the simplest language, on page 48 of volume 2, No. 3, where you say: "The first name of the *French Emperor* in Latin," &c.

The unlearned reader would need to be informed what particular person was meant, bearing the name, and by adding his title in the fewest possible words to identify him against all possibility of being mistaken in the person, I think it a fair and proper addition.

I have counted his name in English in the plainest, simplest, and easiest manner in which a common mind would expect to count a name in the letters of the alphabet, very likely it may be so counted in French, German, or, in fact, any other language where the letters are not numerals.

But I am not yet convinced that Napoleon III is "the Antichrist." I look for further developments. L. A.

"Let me be with thee where thou art,
My Saviour, my eternal rest;
Then only shall this longing heart
Be fully and forever blest."

Digitized by Google

Selections.

CHRIST'S COMING.

As the Scripture plainly testifies that the Lord Jesus Christ once died on the cross for sinners, and that He rose from the dead the third day, and that He now sits in heaven on the right hand of God the Father, so clearly does it also testify THAT THE LORD JESUS IS TO COME AGAIN.

What will be the state of the *world* when the Lord Jesus returns? "As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the Ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise, also, as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from Heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed." (Luke 17: 26–30.) Now, since God has given such a testimony in His word, we ought seriously to consider the remarkable fact, that the Lord Jesus is to come to this world, when things will be going on as in the days of Noah, and as in the days of Lot.

The coming of the Lord Jesus is sufficient to cause fear in every heart that has not yet received forgiveness of sins, and that seriously considers the circumstances and consequences to be such as they are: for though it is very easy now to forget God, and the name of the Lord Jesus, yet in the day when He shall appear, it will be impossible to do so. In that day it will be said, by unconverted men, to the rocks and mountains, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. 6: 16, 17.) In the time of Noah men could easily despise the testimony of a coming deluge, *yet it came;* and what was their condition afterwards? So, also, in the days of Lot; and so, also, at the present time, in connection with the testimony given to the second coming of the Lord Jesus. Forgiveness of sins through the Lord Jesus is now preached; it is expressly testified, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3: 23); and, also, "that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10: 43). But it is also testified that the Lord is to come as a righteous Judge. On that day the Lord Jesus shall appear, "in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints," &c. (2 Thess. 1: 8–10).

Reader, consider these facts. I know well that many shut out from their thoughts everything respecting the second coming of Christ. They say in their deeds (if not in words), "Where is the promise of His coming?" They dislike to think of wrath to come, and that the world will be found in a state of hopeless enmity against God when Christ shall return: they would rather believe that everything is improving, than consent to the testimony of God concerning these things. Consider the days of Noah and the days of Lot, and look forward to the second coming of Christ, as taking place in circumstances similar to those at that period. In the time of Noah some escaped, even those that were in the Ark; and so, to every one that believes in the Lord Jesus now, there shall be safety through His blood in that day. Reader, consider what thy state will be when Christ shall appear as a righteous Judge!

It is easy to say, that a long period will elapse before the appearing of the Lord; but who has informed us that there is to be any such long period? No man on earth can assert (unless he be extremely presumptuous) even a single word about the time of Christ's second coming.

Digitized by Google

One thing, however, is plain, "In such an hour *as ye think not*, the Son of Man cometh."

But though the expectation of this appearing is sufficient to cause the world to fear, yet believers can joyfully look forward as waiting for the Lord in that day; for then shall they receive their full blessing. As soon as the Holy Ghost gives to a sinner faith in the Lord Jesus, he has eternal life in his soul; but when Christ comes, the same life will be in his body also: "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body" (Phil. 3:21). And though the greater part of the saints be dead, every one of them shall arise from the grave, and all believers "which are alive and remain, and the dead in Christ, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17). Well is this hope called by the Apostle "a blessed hope." And so it is even now to every saint who hath received the testimony of the Holy Ghost concerning it.

Christians ought to know, undoubtedly, that the world is in a state of enmity against God, that they themselves are called *out* of the world, not having any hope concerning the *world*, through moral reformation or anything else, *until* the Lord Jesus personally comes, "whom the heaven must receive *until* the times of the *restitution* of all things" (Acts 3:21). The world is now condemned, but, through the Gospel, every sinner that believes is gathered *out* of the world; but on that day the Lord Jesus shall gather "out of His kingdom all things that offend, and they that work iniquity;" the world will still hate the Lord Jesus, without being restored, until He returns in the times of *restitution* (not destruction) of all things. He Himself shall be the great Restorer, and to Him shall all the glory be given.

Believers ought to look onward to the second coming of Christ; they should endeavor to win souls *out* of the world, and to remember the words of Christ concerning themselves, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16); they should, in their practical walk, obey the call of God, "And ye yourselves be like unto men *that wait for their Lord*."

These are but a few observations on a very important subject. Reader, thou art earnestly requested to search into the full testimony of the word of God concerning it; and may He, through His Spirit, teach thee His truth.

THE PURITANS OF NEW ENGLAND.

THEIR VIEWS ON CHRIST'S COMING AND KINGDOM.

In the seventeenth century, and in the beginning of the eighteenth, we find the attention of the churches turned to the hope of the Lord's appearing. As if to prevent the total sleep of Christian men, and their forgetfulness of the day of Christ, again and again did God raise up witnesses in the earth, who took up the cry, "Behold the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." True, He came not in their day: and they passed from their watch on earth to their more blessed waiting above, in His nearer presence. They "tasted death," and were not of those who shall be changed and caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They were gathered to their fathers, and saw corruption. They longed wistfully for their Lord's appearing, knowing it to be the end of the Church's tribulation, and of Israel's scattering, and of earth's heavy curse. But He came not. There seemed to be many signs of His advent; but He came not. Many hearts were fainting and growing weary; still He came not. The fulness of time was "not yet."

Men would say they were "*disappointed*"—some, perhaps, that they were befooled. They were neither. The man who, in faith and love, looks for his Lord, cannot be disappointed. His expectation cannot be put to shame. In one respect, indeed, he does not get the exact thing that he reckoned on. His Lord does not arrive. But "hope maketh not ashamed." No one of the hopes that spring from the knowledge of the crucified Son of God can turn out failures. Least of all can this "hope," which is specially "the blessed hope." It gets its full reward. It has its recompense even now, in the joy, the consolation, the strength, the holiness which it imparts; and it shall be gloriously

Digitized by Google

recompensed hereafter, when He to whom this hope had pointed at length arrives. It shall then be seen that there was no disappointment; and that no one who, however feebly, has sought to witness for the coming of his Lord in evil days, and to keep alive the hope of His kingdom in an age of forgetfulness and worldly security, shall lose his reward. There will be the cheering "Well done," on account of all kinds of faithful service done for the Master here; but there will be the special "Well done" for this special service of testimony and hope and watchfulness, when there were few to testify or hope or watch.

Such witnesses to the Church's hope we find not only in *Old* England, but in *New* England as well. It may be worth our while to notice some of their testimonies. The exact date or time when they wrote or spoke is not of much moment. Some were earlier, some later. But the fact of this New England witness-bearing is interesting.

In Cotton Mather's *Magnalia Christi Americana*, there is a very glowing account of Mr. Davenport (not the Davenport of Whitefield's time), who was born at Coventry, in 1597. He was a hard student, and a great preacher, a friend of such men as Dr. Sibbs, Dr. Preston, Dr. Gouge, and Dr. Thomas Goodwin. He was blessed to do much service to the churches of New England. Mather thus closes his notice of this man of God:

"To conclude; there will be but an unjust account given of the things preached and written by this reverend man, if we do not mention one singular favor of heaven to him. It is well known that, in the earliest of the primitive times, the faithful did, in a literal sense, believe the 'second coming' of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the *rising* and *reigning* of the saints with him, a thousand years before the 'rest of the dead live again,'—a doctrine which, however, some of later years have counted *heretical;* yet, in the days of Irenæus, was questioned by none but such as were counted heretics. It is evident, from Justin Martyr, that this doctrine of the *Chiliad* was in his days embraced among all *orthodox* Christians; nor did this *kingdom* of our Lord begin to be doubted until the kingdom of Antichrist began to advance into a considerable figure, and then it fell chiefly under the reproaches of such men as were fain to deny the divine authority of the Book of Revelation, and of the Second Epistle of Peter. But here was the special favor of Heaven to our Davenport, that so many years ago, when in both Englands the true notion of the Chiliad was hardly apprehended by as many divines of note as there are mouths of Nilus, yet this worthy man clearly saw into it, and both preached and wrote those very things about the *future state*, and *coming* of the Lord, the *calling* of the Jews, and the first and second *resurrection* of the dead, which do now of late years get more ground against the opposition of the *otherwise minded*, and find a kinder entertainment among them that 'search the Scriptures,' and whereof he afterwards, when he was an *old man*, gave the world a little taste, in a judicious preface, before a most learned and nervous treatise, composed by one that was then a *young man*, about the 'mystery of the salvation of Israel.' Even then, so long ago, it was that he asserted, 'A personal, visible, powerful, and glorious coming of the Lord Jesus Christ unto *judgment*, long before the end of the world.' But we must take our leave of this renowned man, and leave him resting in hope to *stand in his lot* at that end."

After this, we meet with the name of Mr. Thomas Walley, who died in 1679. He was driven to New England by the "Act of Conformity." He wrote a work entitled *Balm in Gilead to Heal Zion's Wounds.* Of him Cotton Mather writes thus:

"In my father's preface to his discourses on the *New Jerusalem*, I meet this passage: 'Though it hath been generally thought that the *First Resurrection* spoken of in the Apocalypse is to be understood only in a mystical sense, yet some of the first and eminent teachers in the church believed the *First Resurrection* to be corporeal. So did Mr. Davenport, Mr. Hook (his colleague), of later years that man of an excellent spirit, Mr. Thomas Walley, pastor of the church in Barnstable.' Thus did our pious Chiliast, Walley, it seems, come to his thoughts, as Joseph Mede before him did, and as in the

Digitized by Google

times of more illuminated learned men *must* and *will*."

Then we have Mr. Samuel Whiting:

"He was trained under Sibbs and Preston, and was compelled to seek refuge in New England, in 1636, at which time he said, 'We may take out of God that which we forsook in father, mother, sister, friends, that have been as near and dear as our own soul.' He published a volume of sermons on *Abraham's Prayer for Sodom*, and then a lecture on *The Day of Judgment*." Cotton Mather, speaking of the latter, is led to remark, "In the 58th of Isaiah, the Lord promises a time of wondrous light and joy unto His restored people, and the consolation of a lasting Sabbatism,—*things to be accomplished at the second coming of our Lord.* At the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, one of the first things will be a glorious translation, wherein the members of Christian churches will be called before Him, and be examined, in order to the determination of their new state under the New Jerusalem that is to follow,—either to take their part in the glories of that city and kingdom for *the thousand years* to come, or to be exiled into the confusions of them that are to be without. Now, though it is possible that whole discourse of our Lord (in Matthew 25) may nextly refer to no more than this translation, yet inasmuch as the generality of interpreters have carried it into the more general and ultimate proceedings of the *Last Judgment*, our Whiting did so too."

Mr. Samuel Mather is well known as the writer on the "Types." In that book there is, perhaps, too much "spiritualizing," and hence in it there is no reference to the Lord's coming and kingdom. But of him his relative, Cotton Mather, thus writes:

"He did not so converse with one more obscure part of sacred Scripture as to leave another uncultivated. The difficulties in the *prophetical* part of the New Testament, as well as in the figurative part of the Old, were happily assailed by his learned contemplations. When he had made considerable progress therein, he wrote unto his youngest brother, who was then a minister in New England, and since president of the college there,—'I must needs tell you how much I do rejoice that it hath pleased God to stir up your spirit to search into the prophetical parts of the Scripture; of which I have often thought, and still do, that it is great pity they are so little minded and seen into by many, both ministers and others, who do deprive themselves of much satisfaction which they might receive thereby. It is not good to despise any part of the mind and counsel of God, revealed in His Word; there are unknown treasures there stored up, more precious than gold and silver; and shall we not, in the strength of His Spirit, search for them?' And as the brother to whom he thus wrote gave in sundry treatises, in divers languages, unto the Church of God, several happy fruits of his inquiries into the inspired prophecies, which 'blessed are they that read and hear,' so our Mr. Mather himself arrived unto such attainments herein, that he had no cause to make the confession (though such was his modesty that he was ready enough to do it) of some eminent persons, *Nullus sum in propheticis.* When it is said, 'Blessed are they that keep the things written in this prophecy,' a mathematician will tell us that what we render *keep*, is rather to be rendered *observe*, or *watch*, or *mind;* for τηρεῖν is used by the Greeks as a term of art, expressing the astronomical observation of eclipses, planetary aspects, and other celestial phenomena. Mr. Mather, accordingly, counted it his blessedness to take an observation of what fulfilment the divine books of prophecy already had received, and thence to make computation of the times that were yet before us, and of the things to be done in those times."

After this, we have Dr. Increase Mather, who, in more publications than one, has shown his strong millenarian leanings. We take a brief passage from his *Discourse concerning Faith and Fervency in Prayer, and the glorious kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ now Approaching*, published at Boston, in 1710:

"*Piscator*, a little before his death, wrote a discourse concerning the future happy estate of the Church. It is a subject proper to be meditated on by those who are, as I am, hastening into the eternal world. I die in the faith of the speedy accomplishment of those glorious

Digitized by Google

things which are spoken concerning the city of God and the kingdom of Christ. Amen! Even so come, Lord Jesus! come quickly!"

We may notice that Dr. Mather gives the following striking testimony to the way in which the New England divines, before his day, had turned their own attention and that of their people to the subject of Christ's reign:

"The first and famous pastors in the New English churches did, in their public ministry, frequently insist on the doctrine of Christ's glorious kingdom on earth, which shall take place after the conversion of the Jews, and when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in. *It is pity that this doctrine is no more inculcated by the present ministry*, which has induced me the rather to preach, and now by the press to publish, what is emitted herewith."—*Preface*, p. 18.

The name of John Eliot, the Apostle of the Indians, is well known. It will be seen from the following extract how this man of God delighted in the hope of the Lord's coming:

"While he was thus making his retreat out of this evil world, his discourses from time to time ran upon the 'coming of the Lord Jesus Christ;' it was the theme which he still had recourse unto, and we were sure to have something of this whatever other subject he were upon. On this he talked, on this he prayed, for this he longed; and especially when any bad news arrived, his usual reflection thereupon would be, 'Behold some of the clouds in which we must look for the coming of the Son of man.' At last his Lord, for whom he had been long wishing, 'Lord, come! I have been a great while ready for thy coming,'—at last, I say, his Lord fetched him away."

These are but a few names, yet they are truly interesting. Their testimony is brief, but it is precious. With but little light and with many prejudices to battle with, these worthies held fast the hope. How inexcusable are we, in these days of far greater prophetic light, if our witness-bearing be dim or defective or faltering!

Editorial.

THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

REMARKS ON ITS NATURE AND EXTENT.

An esteemed friend and co-worker sends us three inquiries, to which he desires a response through the columns of The Prophetic Times. As they relate to topics upon which many are at a loss, and with which some have great difficulties, we propose to devote an article to them. The inquiries are,

"1. Will the new heavens and earth, and the New Jerusalem of Isaiah, Peter, and John, with the previous conflagration and change, be *before* the Millennium or *after* it?

"2. What is the extent of the change that the globe will experience in the fulfilment of such passages as these: 'Thou wilt renew the face of the earth' (Ps. 104:30); 'The heavens shall *perish*' (Ps. 102:25); especially (2 Pet. third chapter), 'The heavens and the earth which are now, are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men,' &c.?

"3. If this melting of the elements with intense heat, dissolution of the heavens by fire, and the burning up of the earth and its works is *literal*, how can mortal nations exist endlessly on the earth as the subjects of Messiah's everlasting kingdom? Is not the literal conflagration inconsistent with the survival of mortal men on the earth?"

In answer to these questions, we can only give our opinion, and what our learning of the Scriptures is. It does not become any of us to dogmatize upon matters so solemn and mysterious. We do not, however, feel the embarrassment upon this subject which seems to disturb and oppress some of our brethren. We take the Scriptures as we would take any other

Digitized by Google

serious and honest writing meant for human enlightenment. We take the literal to be the true sense, except where there is an obvious employment of figures, or where the indication is plain that some metaphorical signification is intended. Nor do we find such an acceptation of the passages referred to at all inconsistent with the doctrine of the perpetuity of the earth, and of men in the flesh upon it during the Millennium, or throughout unending generations. We believe that the changes spoken of are not all to occur at once; that they will not be confined either to the commencement, or to the close of the Millennial reign; that they are to be effected partly before the Millennium, and partly after it; that the Millennium itself, with the judgments which mark its incoming and its outgoing, is a dispensation,—a series of separate Divine administrations,—by means of which the grand "restitution of all things" is to be effected, and the eternal state introduced; that the whole process is one of miracle upon miracle, taking for its basis that which is, and thence bringing forth that which is to be; and that, in such a conception of things, if God so wills, there is nothing to hinder the existence of nations in the flesh through the whole and forever. The last chapters of Isaiah and 2 Thess. 1:8 show that there are to be great judgment-fires at the commencement of the Millennium; and Rev. 20:9 shows that there are to be great judgment-fires at the end of the thousand years. And both seem to be included in the general picture presented in the third of 2 Peter, the same as the two advents or the two resurrections are often embraced in one and the same prophetic description.

More, however, we think, has been made of these fires than is warranted by Scripture. Dr. J. Pye Smith has said, "I cannot but feel astonished that any serious and intelligent man should have his mind fettered with the common —I might call it the vulgar—notion of a proper destruction of the earth. Some seem to extend the notion to the whole solar system, applied to the idea of an extinction of it, and reducing it to nothing; and this notion has been general, and thus it has gained so strong a hold upon the feelings of many pious persons that they have made it an article of faith. But I confess myself unable to find any evidence for it in nature, reason, or Scripture." We confess to the same inability. The strongest and most explicit passage on the subject, in all the Bible, is that from second Peter, which, we have no hesitation to say, is rather strongly translated, and has been so worded in the English version as to lead off the reader's imagination beyond what was the apostle's meaning. Let us look at it closely, and such shall be found to be the truth. We have elsewhere given a criticism on the passage, but its repetition in this connection may not be out of place.

Peter speaks of "the heavens being on fire," and as to "pass away," and "be dissolved." People read this, and begin to think of the regions of the sun, moon, and stars, and so mount up among the orbs and systems of creation, until the words before them become a picture of the entire wreck of the whole material universe. But I am satisfied that there was nothing of the sort in the mind of Peter, or of the Holy Ghost, by which he wrote. The word rendered "heavens" means simply the atmosphere which surrounds the earth, and does not carry us any further than the regions of the clouds and winds, —"the *air*" (Matt. 8:20; Rev. 19:17), "the *sky*" (Matt. 16:3), the realm of the clouds (Matt. 24:30; James 5:18). The word rendered "being on fire" simply means inflamed, made fiery, and may be considered as having its import in this place exhausted by a condition of the atmosphere in which it is heated, filled with fiery volcanic emissions, and lit up with lightnings. The word rendered "shall pass away" does not mean to cease to exist. It means to *pass*, as from one place or state to another; as where we read, "that no man might *pass* by that way" (Matt. 8:28), "Jesus of Nazareth *passeth by*" (Luke 18:37). As applied to the atmosphere, it expresses a change, implying motion, and that very violent and boisterous, as the accompanying word, rendered "with a great noise," also indicates.* The

* ῥοιζηδόν, with a noisy rushing. Cranmer's Bible reads, "*in the manner of a tempest*;" De Wette, "*mit Geräusch.*"

Digitized by Google

additional word rendered "dissolved" is of the same general import. It means to loosen, unbind; as where the Saviour says of the colt, "*Loose* him;" and of the apostles, "Whatsoever ye *shall loose* on earth shall be *loosed* in heaven." It is used in Acts 27:41 with reference to the breaking away of the hinder part of the ship in which Paul was wrecked. It refers here to the rupture of those influences which now hold the various parts of the physical world in quiet,—to a freeing of the elements to rush and dash about in destructive commotion and unrestrained fury, just as the Psalmist describes the scene: "Our God shall come; a fire shall devour before him, *and it shall be very tempestuous round about him.*" (Ps. 50:3.) This is the whole extent concerning the fate of "the heavens."

And even in what is said of "the earth," the word does not necessarily mean the entire globe on which we dwell. We often speak of *the earth* without meaning the whole planet. When any violent upheaval or agitation of the surface of the earth occurs in a particular district or country, we say, *the earth* shook, and call it an *earth*quake,—when really it was only the crust of the earth, and that in one limited locality. In the night-time we say, *the earth* is wrapped in darkness, when it is less than one-half of the earth that is so enshrouded. The same word is also frequently translated *land, country;* as, "the *land* of Gennesaret" (Mark 6:53). "His fame went abroad in all *that country*" (Matt. 9:31),—where the original is, all that *earth.* And when we here read of the burning of the earth, we are by no means warranted in jumping at the conclusion that it means the reduction of the entire globe to chaos, ashes, or nothingness. The earth may be vastly and terrifically subjected to the action of fire, and yet many sections of it experience no inconvenience whatever. The phrase "burnt up" is also rather expressive for the original, which means simply *to be burned.* The idea of total consumption is often attached to it, but not necessarily. A very great degree of burning is doubtless expressed by it in this place, but not so much as alone to convey the idea, so often presented, that the whole organized structure of the earth is to be reduced to liquid fire, converted into cinders, or swept out of existence. Terrific as these judgment-fires will doubtless be, and fearful as will be the desolations they shall spread among the enemies of righteousness and upon the armies of Antichrist, and great as shall be the changes they are to work in earth, air, and sea, I find nothing whatever in this or any other portion of Scripture to induce the belief that they will extend further than the particular sections and localities where Christ shall be manifested to his enemies.

By "the elements," of which the apostle speaks, we are to understand the substances or component parts of the physical world. They do not include everything embraced in the constitution of the earth, except as every constituent element of the earth is found in any given portion of it; just as we find the elements of the ocean in any drop from the ocean. The reference, plainly, is only to such fusible and inflammable substances as may be subject to the action of the judgment-fires, without determining anything as to the extent of the conflagration. The word rendered "*shall melt,*" is very much the same as that just before translated "dissolved," and is nearly everywhere else in the Scriptures translated *loosed.* The additional word rendered "with fervent heat," is the participle of a verb signifying *to be heated, set on fire, inflamed.* The plain grammatical meaning of the phrase is, that certain elementary substances of the earth shall become loosed and disintegrated by being heated and set on fire, as in the case of great and violent volcanic eruptions, when vast floods of fire and lava are ejected from the earth, filling whole countries with darkness and destruction.

And in such a condition of things we can easily conceive what is meant by the other phrase, "the works that are in the earth shall be burned." Our version reads, "*all* the works;" but this word *all,* upon which some lay so much stress in this connection, is not in the original. It is an addition of the translator. There is no reason to believe that *all* the works that are in the earth shall be burned. Of course, as far as the earth itself is burned, and as far as the heated storms and floods of loosed and melted

Digitized by Google

elements shall extend, so far all the works of man shall be consumed and destroyed. But, as there is nothing to show that the burning and fusing of the earth is to be universal, so there is no reason to believe that this destruction of the works that are in it is to be universal: the one is commensurate with the other, and in neither case do the words imply universality.

The statement which the apostle gives concerning the *object* of these fires also bears out the conclusion that they are not to be universal. They are "for the perdition of ungodly men;" that is, for the temporal destruction,* and the precipitation into the torments of another world, of those upon whom Christ's particular vengeance is to fall in that notable day of the Lord. The "ungodly men" here spoken of I cannot take to be all classes of the unregenerate, including everybody not found worthy to escape the great tribulation of those times. The Scriptures teach that there will be some "left," even after the great tribulation and the general ingathering, who shall pass over, as Noah and his family over the flood, to be the subjects of that new order of things which is then to be set up.† The victims of these judgment-fires are to be only the actually and flagrantly wicked, men distinguished for their impiety and rejection of the claims of God, confederates in wrong, adherents of the beast and the false prophet, and despisers and blasphemers of the Gospel of Jesus; as we read in various passages of Scripture.‡ "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." (Isa. 2 : 12.) And that these characters may receive this their doom in the most signal manner, we read that they are to be marvellously drawn together by Providence (Zech. 14 : 2; Rev. 16 : 16), as the wicked Jews in the end of their state were gathered together within the walls of Jerusalem, and, at a moment when they least expect it, the Lord will "plead against them with pestilence and with blood, and will rain upon them an overflowing rain, and great hailstones and fire and brimstone" (Ezek. 28 : 32); "and their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth" (Zech. 14 : 12); whilst their leaders are "cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone;" so fulfilling the words of the Psalm (37 : 20), "The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away!" And so also shall it be with all their works. It is the same in regard to Gog and Magog at the end of the thousand years (Rev. 20 : 8, 9). But both scenes have local limits.

Nor are these judgment-fires then first to be created. They already exist, stored away in the mysterious constitution of nature. Our version speaks of "the heavens and the earth which are now," as "kept in store, reserved unto fire." But many translate the apostle's words to mean that it is *the fire* that is stored. According to this rendering, this passage furnishes a remarkable illustration of how the Scriptures have anticipated the discoveries and inductions of modern science. All the elements around us are full of latent fire. The earth we tread on is a globe of imprisoned fire. For every fifty feet you penetrate into its interior you have the temperature a degree warmer than at the surface. If you were to bore on inward towards its centre, you would not reach the depth of one hundred miles before coming to an intensity of heat which would fuse the hardest substances of which the earth is composed. Scientific men, accordingly, assure us that under a thin crust, proportioned to the whole mass about as the tire to the wheel of a wagon, there seethes a whole world of fires, struggling for vent, and here and there showing themselves from volcanic craters. And it is simply the *letting loose* of these, in particular localities, with the tempests, and earthquakes, and convulsions in earth and air which must needs attend such an event, that the apostle sets before us. Whilst the descending Saviour

* The Geneva version reads "destruction," instead of "perdition;" De Wette, "*Untergange*"—*overthrow.*

† See Isa. 66 : 15, 19–24; Zech. 14; Matt. 24 : 22; Rev. 21 : 24.

‡ See Dan. 7 : 10, 11; Matt. 13 : 41, 42; 2 Thess. 1 : 7, 8; Rev. 16 : 13–19; 19 : 19, 20.

Digitized by Google

shall be revealed in clouds, thunder, and terrific lightnings from above, the fiery flood from beneath shall break open its prison-doors, and a war of loosed elements ensue, at which the earth and heavens shall shake, the sun be darkened, and the moon become as blood, whilst earth's rightful King shall ride upon it all, sweeping out before his dread chariot-wheels the culminated strength of hell's monstrous usurpations, but not necessarily divesting the earth of all its population, as some erroneously suppose. (See also Prophetic Times, vol. 2, pp. 12–16; 27–30.)

THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

THE first temptation that was presented to Eve in Paradise was the subtle promise of gratifying a desire for knowledge. This desire was laudable in itself, and was doubtless implanted with the view to its gratification by the Creator in his own good time and way. In all times God has required a patient waiting at his hand from the creature, and as in the garden, so now, patience in the creature is entirely consistent with his relation to the Creator.

The Father knew that our first parents might receive knowledge from Satan, the arch deceiver, ready and waiting for the attack, but He knew likewise that such knowledge would be imperfect and distorted, and, therefore, full of error, and that its results would be only evil. Had Eve in humble loving patience waited God's initiation into the mysteries which surrounded her, and which made her wonder at every step, how different would have been the destiny of our race. *She did not.* Impatient curiosity urged her to open her ear to unrighteous communication, and thus from the beginning was woven that tangled web which catches our feet at every step, and involves us in inextricable woes. It appears, then, that the sin was not in the desire for knowledge, for none can reject the belief that it was God's purpose to gratify that desire. The sin was in the willingness to receive knowledge from a wrong source. So much for the beginning—now for the end.

In the minds of many is held the belief that the end of the present dispensation is at hand. I am impressed with the conviction that now in the end a similar transgression is in process as developed in spiritualism. Man, in this instance, with an insatiable curiosity to learn what God has purposed to hide for a time, is resorting to ways and means which seem to involve the same co-operation as that which inaugurated our first parents. It is true, spiritualism has existed in one form or another during the history of the race, but its culmination promises to be due to the 19th century, and I am inclined to think its subtilty and power appeal more forcibly to the material nature of man rather than to the more spiritual nature of woman. Strange as the proposition may seem, I think it will bear investigation. It may be, that now, when this dispensation is about to close, the power of this demoniac influence shall find its forms in one man, and thus complete the circle which makes the beginning and the end. H.

FALSE MESSIAHS.

"There shall arise false Christs and false prophets."—MATT. 24 : 23.

A TRAVELLER just returned from Upper Egypt reports a serious disturbance in that country, north and south of Kao. It is said that a man of the neighborhood has lately proclaimed himself the herald of the Messiah, who is to come from the East, and who is to be the leader of Moslems as well as Christians. The ideas which he put into the people's heads appear to have made them desperate in their revolt against the government of the Viceroy, who has sent up his officers, with thousands of Bashi-Bazuks, to reduce them to subjection.

A new sensation has also recently been experienced in India. It is not the Giasticutus, or Zampilaerostation. It is the Veerabogavasantarayan,—a personage whose appearance is just now predicted in Southern India, with irresistible hosts at his heels, to expel the Feringhee, the Kaffir, the pale face, and restore the Hindoo rule. This mysterious *name* has two years in which to do his work, and the English press are beginning to grow excited upon the subject, and to recall the various prophecies and outgivings in regard to the "coming man" of the Indian populations.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. JULY, 1865. No. 7.

Special Contributions.

FROM SMYRNA TO BEIROUT.

NOTES OF TRAVEL.

BY J. A. SEISS, D.D.

It was at Smyrna that Polycarp suffered martyrdom for his honesty and firmness in confessing Christ, and adhering to the faith which would not permit the worshipping of emperors, or any other idols. A brief account of the transaction may not be unacceptable, as Christians of our day have reason, in view of what is coming in the world, to school themselves well in the martyr spirit, in order to meet the persecutions and idolatries which shall mark the last days.

The early Christians were often called "Atheists," because they refused to offer worship to the heathen deities. "Away with the Atheists" (which meant, "Away with the Christians and Christianity") was the formula which the Roman government required them to repeat as a proof of their loyalty, inflicting death upon those who refused. The words, in their true sense, a Christian might utter without compromising principle. But when Polycarp was asked to repeat them, he distinctly explained that it was not Christians whom he called Atheists. Unwilling was he, even for his life's sake, to take shelter under anything that might be, by any possibility, construed into an appearance of equivocation. He knew in whom he believed, and he openly declared himself accordingly. As he was going into the lists, a voice said to him, "Be strong, Polycarp, and quit thyself like a man." It was believed to be a voice from heaven. When brought into the presence of the court, the Proconsul asked him if he was Polycarp. Being answered in the affirmative, he sought to persuade the aged Christian to deny the faith, beseeching him to reverence his old age, to swear by the fortunes of Cæsar, to repent, and say, "Away with the Atheists." Looking with a severe countenance on the company of godless Gentiles before him, Polycarp stretched forth his hand towards them, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and groaned, saying, "Away with the Atheists." The Proconsul appealed to him again, saying, "Swear, and I will release thee: reproach Christ." Polycarp answered, "Fourscore and six years have I continued serving Him, and He hath never the least wronged me; how, then, can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?" The Proconsul said, "I have wild beasts ready; to those I will cast thee, unless thou repent." "*Then call for them*," said the faithful man of God; "for we Christians have our minds settled never to change from good to evil. But it will be good for me to be changed from my grievous sufferings here to their heavenly reward hereafter." More attempts were made to shake his steadfastness, but equally without avail; and the holy man was led out by the executioners, and burned at the stake. God grant a like fidelity to all confessors of His Name!

It was ten o'clock, October 25th, at the place where all this occurred, that we went aboard the comfortless old screw-steamer "*Ionio*," of the Austrian Lloyd Company, expecting to sail in two hours for Syria. Our anchor was not weighed till twelve at night. In the morning

Digitized by Google

we found ourselves where Paul and his party once were, "over against Chios." It was Sunday, a bright and beautiful day, and full of interesting suggestions; but it was not so beautiful long. By noon the clouds gathered; the winds began to blow; the waves commenced their wild chase of each other upon the sea; and a gale was presently upon us. It was not so terrible a storm as may be read of, but the mad billows dashed upon our steamer, lashing the spray over its sides from end to end, and making the old hulk dance and toss in ever-varying style. It was not such a tempest, nor accompanied with such darkness, as Paul once experienced for fourteen days upon these waters; but it was rather inconvenient, nevertheless. There were many solemn countenances on board that afternoon and evening. But, early deposited in a niche in the extreme stern of the boat, welcome slumbers soon shut out from me the noise of winds and seas, as well as the jarring rattle of machinery and the groans of the sick.

By morning the storm had disappeared, the waves had sunk to rest, and we found ourselves moving on in comfort and peace. Samos was in sight, the isle where the old Greeks fought the Persians more than four centuries before Christ, where Pythagoras was born, and where Paul and his party spent a night at the anchorage of Trogyllium. Twenty miles to the southwest of Samos, lay the ever-memorable isle of Patmos, a mere mass of bleak and barren rocks, surrounded by the sea, and used by the Romans as a place of banishment for convicts. It was to this place that the apostle John was exiled (Rev. 1:9). Here he saw the glorified Saviour, and received and wrote those solemn Apocalyptic commissions and revelations which are so especially commended to the attention of the Church (Rev. 1:31), and so necessary to be studied in these last times. The grotto, in which he is supposed to have lived, is still pointed out. It is covered by a chapel, the walls of which bear crude pictures of John's visions, and in which the monks keep lamps continually burning. They also show fissures in the roof through which they say the "voice from heaven, like the sound of a trumpet," came. We did not approach very close to this island, but passed it nearly midway between it and Miletus, the place where Paul met the elders of Ephesus, gave them his farewell charge, and prayed with them on the shore (Acts 20:17–36). That shore is now ten miles inland, the sea having receded about that distance in the last 1800 years. Miletus was also far more famous five hundred years before Paul's day, than it ever has been since. What was once a flourishing Ionian city is now but a waste, flat and desolate plain, full of marshes and pestilence.

Another morning, and we were looking on the pleasant Island of Cos ("Coos," Acts 21:1), one of the most renowned of that beautiful chain of islands which covers the western shore of Asia Minor. It is here that Apelles and Hippocrates were born, that the Jews stored much treasure during the Mithridatic war, and that Paul and his companions spent the night in their journey to Jerusalem. The houses, among the fruit-trees along the northeastern shore, and up the sloped hillsides, seemed particularly inviting, at least at the distance at which we saw them.

The same day we anchored for a few hours at Rhodes, celebrated for its Colossus, for its being the stronghold of the Knights of St. John, for its long siege by Solyman the Magnificent, for its splendid climate, and its remarkable fertility. The old church of St. John is now a mosque, and the grand hospital of the Knights is a public granary. The Saracens, Turks, and earthquakes have destroyed nearly all the memorials of its ancient splendor. Here, also, Paul and his companions spent a night.

From Rhodes, we headed directly for Cyprus, which we reached, November 2d, and anchored in front of Larnaca, the ancient "Citium," nearly all the day. It was on this island that Zeno was born, and Cimon died. It was the native land of Barnabas, "the son of consolation," as also of Mnason, "an old disciple." It is the place whither many of the Christians of Judea betook themselves from the persecutions which followed the martyrdom of Stephen, and where they gained so many disciples to the faith for which they were exiles. Here Paul and Bar-

Digitized by Google

nabas performed their first missionary labors. And here Barnabas, John, and Mark came after the disagreement with Paul, and their separation from him. It was once a rich and famous country, full of fruits and flowers, metals, and wines. The Ptolomies regarded it as one of their most cherished possessions. Its present Turkish Pasha, or governor, was with us when we came to it. He had been a fellow passenger from Smyrna. He is a dignified and pleasant gentleman, and a devoted Mahomedan, as he proved to us every day by his lustrations and genuflections. He was received by the inhabitants of Larnaca with signal pomp and display. The flags were unfurled to the breezes; the soldiers presented arms; officers bowed to touch the hem of his garment; and all the guns were set booming from the fort. To use an Italian proverb, "there was much smoke, but a small roast." I was reminded of the difference between this disembarkation and a certain embarkation at this island, when the great Apostle of the Gentiles, bearing with him the Gospel and authority of Jesus, stepped into the boat which was to bear him to Salamis, and land Christianity and the kingdom of God in the West. In the latter case, it was all roast, and no smoke at all. Earth took no note of it, but it was the very pouring out of salvation to the Gentile world.

Another night of rolling on the sea, and we found ourselves anchored on the Syrian coast, with the Mediterranean at length between us and sunset, and Beirout looking down upon us from the gray morning on Lebanon's sides.

CLIPPINGS OF ITEMS.

A REMARKABLE PROPHECY.

NOT long ago was found at Toledo, in Spain, in a monastery, a paper containing the following prophecy:

"In the far west, beyond the ocean, will be a nation which will be great in power and wealth, and Satan, in one of his walks to and fro in the earth, will observe this nation, and, determined to destroy their happiness, will there send two monsters, one to the North, and the other to the South, and he will give them strawberries, and after they have eaten they will feel a great thirst, not to be quenched by anything but blood.

"They will, therefore, cause the brother to slay the brother, the father to slay the son, and the son the father; and they will drink the blood of the slain, and it will bring lamentation and wailing throughout the land. And when the time is fulfilled, there will rise a strong man in the north, and will take the monsters, and bind them, and will draw them into the sea where it is the deepest, and peace and happiness will again prevail throughout, and the people will praise the Lord."

It is said the monks in said monastery maintain that the prophecy was written before the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus; that Ferdinand and Isabella were in the main induced by it to fit out the ship for Columbus; that the first part is fulfilled in America and that the other will soon come to pass.

AN APPROACHING STORM.

The following, from a Paris correspondent, dated November 18, 1864, published in the New York Tribune, shows how theological matters appear in Europe:

"There are those who think that what is passing in the whole religious world to-day is but the harbinger of a great approaching change; of the dissolution of that system of medieval theocracy, which has exercised for a thousand years so great a power over the minds and consciences of men and the most of nations. Many of the most enlightened minds of this age are filled with a presentiment of an approaching storm; and though we are unable to foresee the results of a great ecclesiastical revolution (of which the fall of the temporal power of the Papacy would probably be the signal), yet it is impossible for the most sanguine, or the most indifferent, to ignore that in every European country a strong religious movement is taking place."

INCREASE OF CRIME.

It is a notorious fact that wickedness and infidelity are on a rapid increase in our country, and every civilized land. Facts to sustain such a statement are abundant. And yet many

Digitized by Google

blind guides cry "peace and safety," and would try to persuade people that the world is growing better, instead of admitting the sad fact that nominal Christendom is fast becoming so conformed to the *world*, that the difference is more in name than in reality. The word of the Lord declares that "in the last days" "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." If it was not so, the prophecy could not be true.

Says the New York Mercury of April 1st, 1865, under the head of "MANY MURDERS:"

"It is noticeable, how in this fifth year of the war, the number of civil crimes is increasing. Some of the tragedies recently enacted in both the East and the West are of a terrible character, and the details of the executions succeeding them are almost as revolting as the original bloodshed. Cases where whole families have been butchered, and many of the crimes committed have been treacherous and unnatural beyond parallel. All this shows the slow, but certain demoralization of war, when life becomes so cheap, that bad men take it without compunction. We cannot now redeem the evil, and must be contented with remarking it, and regretting it."

CONDITION OF THE JEWS.

In the 27th Report of the Episcopal Jews' Chapel Abrahamic Society, for visiting, corresponding with, and relieving the temporal wants of believing and inquiring Israelites, it is stated that there are at present about 20,000 Jews residing in the Holy Land. From the commencement of this century an unquenchable thirst after knowledge has also manifested itself on the Continent among the Jewish people. Colleges, universities, and higher schools are attended proportionately by a much larger number of Jewish than Christian students throughout Germany, Austria, and France. In Prussia, seven times more Jews than Gentiles devote themselves to the higher branches of knowledge, arts, and sciences. The fields of polite literature, journalism, arts and sciences, are filled with Jewish aspirants. Some of the best literary, political and scientific periodicals have been, and still are, edited by Jews. Some of Germany's most conspicuous poets are Jews. Several of its most celebrated painters, engravers, medallists, musicians and composers are Jews, while there is scarcely a university, but one or more chairs are occupied by Jews, and many more by believing Jews.

In England, in France, in Belgium, in Holland, in the kingdom of Italy, and in some minor States of Germany, the Jews have been entirely emancipated. In France and Belgium, the officers of the synagogue are paid by government. The Jews in Poland, who have hitherto groaned under much oppression, have obtained great privileges. They are permitted to buy real estate all through the kingdom; they may live in any part of the country; their testimony is received in every court; Jewish children are admitted to all schools, and the Jews are allowed to open schools of their own. Then those countries and towns from which the Jews have been hitherto excluded, even to our days, open now the gates to them.

"The last number of the Univers Israelite mentions four facts which show the constant progress of liberal ideas on matters concerning liberty of conscience and worship. The Landgrave of Hornburg has abolished the oath, *more judaico*. At Vienna, measures for the suppression of the Ghettos of Lemberg and Cracow are under consideration. At Warsaw, the administrative council of the kingdom has resolved to grant to the Jews the right of holding all functions and offices. In Turkey, the Sultan has decided that the Catholic prelates, the Greek orthodox bishops, and the Jewish rabbies shall sit in the courts of justice by the side of the Cadis and Muftis."—*Galignani's Mess., April* 15.

PLAGUE IN EUROPE.

The Siberian Plague has been raging fiercely in St. Petersburg. Much alarm is felt in Western Europe for fear of its extension thither, following in its old track; and careful precautions of quarantine, &c., are being adopted with a view to prevent its spread.

The French Government has ordered all vessels from St. Petersburg to be put in strict quarantine, while the Austrian Government has sent a medical commission to Russia to inquire

Digitized by Google

into the nature of the epidemic, and the best means of treating it.

A CURIOUS ITEM.

The following extract is taken from the New York World of December 30, 1864. It is found in the letter of its Paris correspondent, December 16th.

"All the world is full of the predictions of a new magician, who made a great impression at the baths of Germany this season. He predicts the beginning of the Millennium in 1870, until which epoch, the Emperor Napoleon is to reign. This man is the nephew of a woman who gained great influence over the Emperor Alexander by her predictions. She foretold the return of Napoleon from Elba and several other important events of that time."

A SKETCH.

SEATED beneath a porch embowered with vines, some fragrant with blooming flowers, others heavy with rich luscious clusters of grapes, were four young ladies, in earnest social converse. Two residents of that noble mansion, whose clear, transparent faces were full of beauty, seemed sad and dispirited at some remarks just made by one of their companions, of noble mien and a cheerful, smiling countenance. One of the sad ones, possessed of the most beauty, said, with energy, "Where are all your prophets, who have predicted the world would end, and all these terrestrial beauties be absorbed in the devouring flame? They certainly are gone, but this mundane sphere is still radiant with life and beauty; the cheerful songsters on the trees around are enlivening us with their hopeful voices, praising the Author of these rich and varied beauties for the continuance of them to us, and I believe they will continue as they are for many generations to come, till holiness shall fill the earth, wickedness cease, and all love the Lord with sincere hearts, making the air to resound, as these delightful songsters in the trees that surround us do, with praise to the living God, without one discordant note. But do, dear Anne, give us something more cheerful, and banish these forebodings which chill our hearts, filling us with sadness and gloom." At this, the lady of noble mien who first spoke, exhibiting surprise blended with pity, exclaimed, "Do you, dear Nelly, call this a sad and gloomy subject? surely, you take a wrong view of it, or you would not feel so. It is a most glorious theme. The Saviour who has chosen *those waiting for him* as his Bride, is coming to take us home with him to the mansions which he said he would prepare for us. And he himself said, 'When ye see these signs of my near approach, then lift up your heads and rejoice, for your redemption draweth near.' Redemption from sin, redemption from these vile bodies which so clog our souls when they desire to rise in contemplation of that divine beauty and love which surrounds our blessed Saviour in that world of life and light. What joy should it bring to our hearts; far greater than we should experience were a beloved one to send a message to one of us he was *coming* to make us his Bride! Were it so, how our faces would shine, and how we should watch and long for his approach. If we have a just sense of *that wonderful*, that *astonishing love* which, instead of consigning us to despair, comes to make us his Bride, the chosen of his heart, and instal us as joint heirs of his throne, it should fill us with joy unspeakable to see the signs of his near approach.

"I expect his speedy appearance, but probably none but his waiting ones will hear the call, or know of his coming to take them to him in the air, to live forever in his presence. To such he will not come as a thief (1 Thess. 5:5). To all others his coming will be as a thief in the night (1 Thess. 5:2 and 3). Then one shall be taken, and another left, and nothing but the absence of loved ones will be known. Where they have flown, none can tell us. Oh! glorious truth, my Saviour is near, and I shall see him, as he is full of love and peace. Would that I could behold him now; he's mine, he's mine! Amazing love beyond compare!" As she thus spoke with great animation, her countenance grew brighter and brighter, and shone with heavenly brilliancy, so that her companions, being scarcely able to look at her face, turned their eyes from her. Soon looking again to the place she occupied, they saw it was vacant, and

Digitized by Google

she was not visible. With tears in their eyes they looked to each other. Soon Nelly, the beautiful, spoke: "Where is she? Oh! how beautiful she was; how she gazed as if her eyes would pierce the very heavens. But has she gone? Has the Saviour taken her, and left us to endure that tribulation and woe which she said would be the portion of those who did not look for him, or who did not love his appearing. It is now too late! Oh, that we had hearkened to her counsel, watching for his coming, that we might be with her in the presence of the Saviour!" M. C. O.

THE FUTURE OF THE LOST.

BY REV. C. P. KRAUTH, D.D.

THE man who is fixed in his purpose of continuing in sin, sometimes takes up the Bible with the desperate resolve that he will find in it a God to suit him; that the hateful doctrine of a retribution beyond the grave shall not be discovered there. And never has the "depth of Satan" been more manifest than in this, that men have been able, or had the audacity to pretend that they were able, to extract from *this* book the doctrine that there is *no* future punishment, or that it is *limited*, or that it is not *suffering*, but merely *annihilation*.

The vain seeker for peace in his sins opens the book. What mean those expressions, "the curse of the law;" "the wrath to come;" "that men shall stand before the judgment bar to receive according to their works;" "to give to every man the *fruit* of his doings;" "shall have judgment without mercy?" "God is pure mercy," the Adversary whispers. That Satanic prompter, who talks of nothing but God's justice and wrath, when he wishes to drive men to despair, talks of nothing but God's love and His long-suffering when he wishes to lull men into security. How he urged and pleaded for boundless trust in God when he would tempt the Saviour to cast himself from the pinnacle: "Fear not, He will give his angels charge over thee. Thy foot even shall not strike the stone." But the answer of our Lord then is the true answer ever: "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Throw not thyself on an imagined mercy which has no promise. God's mercy has its means and conditions, and he who will not conform to both shall not obtain mercy. Never is Satan so deep and dangerous as when he becomes most evangelical, preaches the Gospel, and parades the good tidings of salvation with an earnestness which leaves him no time to say a word about its conditions.

The seeker takes up his Bible to find mercy there, but the mercy he finds there has such limitations as these: "I will render VENGEANCE, says Jehovah, to mine enemies." "VENGEANCE is mine." "In flaming fire taking vengeance on those that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." "Indignation and wrath upon every soul of man that doeth evil." "Fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Driven from the position that there shall be no retribution, his Tempter has still another depth, and prompts him to find a fearful relief in the hope that the second death may be annihilation. He shall lapse into unconsciousness. The spirit of the bad man shall utterly pass away. Life is a bubble; the thin shell of the body is broken; a little spray falls on the ground; a little dust is laid in the grave, and that is all. There follows life, the long, long sleep,—the sleep which knows no waking. Surely he can torture the Bible into this meaning. But that Book is as a bell hung by Jehovah above the sunken rocks on the shoals of time; it tolls with every touch of the sweeping and surging passions of men; tolls a knell, a tremendous, yet a merciful knell to all such hopes. It makes the sea of life pulse its own perils. Listen to that toll: "Depart, ye accursed, into everlasting fire." Listen to that toll: "There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." Listen to that toll: "They have no rest, day nor night." Listen, stroke after stroke: "They shall dwell with everlasting burnings." "When once the Master of the house is risen up, and has shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us, he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are. Depart from me, all ye

Digitized by Google

workers of iniquity." "Ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." "The rich man in hell lifts up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom," and cries for mercy; speaks of his torments; pleads for his brethren. Can the annihilated exist at the judgment-day, and depart? can the annihilated enter fire, and that fire everlasting? can they weep and wail? can it be said that they have no rest who have all rest? can they dwell in flames? can that which is not have an abode? can the annihilated reason, and plead, and be conscious of their misery and the joy of the redeemed? Dashed on these hidden rocks lie sad wrecks, but all the wrecked were lost because they would not listen to that solemn bell.

The man who is seeking in the Bible the evidence that he is as the beasts that perish, cannot close his eyes to the fact that it speaks of DEGREES of punishment. The servant who knew his master's will, and did it not, shall be beaten with *many* stripes, he who knew it not shall be beaten with *few*. "It shall be MORE TOLERABLE for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment." "The Pharisees shall receive *greater* damnation." Now suffering has degrees, but annhilation has none; has neither *few* nor *many* strokes. It is itself one oblivious stroke which puts it beyond Omnipotence itself to inflict a second. One man, or one set of men, cannot be *more tolerably* annihilated than another; one cannot have a greater annihilation than another.

The searcher is forced to see that the punishment of men and of fallen angels is represented as of the same kind. "Depart, ye accursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." But the devil and his angels are not *annihilated*. They exist. The devils believe and tremble. The very prince of evil who is trying to delude men by this plea gives in his very existence an answer to his own falsehood. No, no; it is too fearfully true, as the Bible declares, the ungodly "shall be *tormented* (not annihilated) in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb (the annihilated would no longer have a presence, or be in a presence), and the smoke of their torment (not of their annihilation) ascendeth up (not for a few years, or a few thousands of years, or a few millions of years) but FOREVER AND EVER.

Selections.

OUR TIMES AND OUR CHURCHES.

THE DISEASE WITHOUT THE REMEDY.

"OUR Times and our Churches,"* is the title of a remarkable pamphlet which we have read with the care which such a theme demands. Not as a literary production—though it is written with marked ability and transparent clearness—but as an ecclesiastical utterance does this paper concern us; and in this light it concerns all professing Christians most deeply. It is a sorrowful complaint, a sad confession, a book of lamentations. If its picture of the state of religion be not too deeply shaded, there is the most urgent necessity for an examination of the causes of this sombre fact, and for their instant removal, if such removal be possible by human instrumentality. In his prefatory note, Mr. Hebditch lays down, in a very few words, what may with strict propriety be called the text of his discourse: Here it is:

"Although this paper was read by request at the autumnal meeting of the Congregational Union at Hull, the writer wishes it to be understood that he alone is responsible for the contents. Further inquiry and reflection have confirmed his conviction of the general accuracy of his statements. In our churches there is

* A paper read at the autumnal meeting of the Congregational Union of England and Wales, held at Hull, October, 1864. By the Rev. Samuel Hebditch.

Digitized by Google

much activity of religious thought and life, and, generally, very much good to be acknowledged, but there is also much evil to deplore. In calling the latter declension, the writer does not mean that those who now compose our churches have declined, but that the present generation of Christians is, *in the respects indicated*, inferior to the generation just passed away. Speaking of the Church. it is declension. Speaking of individuals, it is non-attainment."

Declension or the non-attainment of individuals! These are ominous words, and the illustrations which the writer gives of this condensed view of the whole subject are sufficiently painful to awaken deep anxiety, especially on the part of those who believe that according to the divine scheme the gigantic work of the world's conversion has been committed to the Church. If we believed this, the paper before us would fill our minds with anguish, if it did not actually prostrate us beneath hopeless despair.

What says this good and earnest Christian man? First, generally, he puts a few questions, and then in detail he exhibits the ground upon which they are raised: "Now what *is* the general impression as to the present condition of our churches? Does not every pastor here feel a measure of dissatisfaction with the average piety of his own church? Is it what it might be? Is it what he hoped it would be? Is it, in some cases, what it was?" He gratefully recognizes the good that exists, but actually finds that it is "strikingly exceptional."

He traces the influence of the age on religion by noticing what has been its effect *on man's estimate of himself*. "When that estimate is exaggerated, religion always suffers. The Christ is lowered if the *Ego* is raised; the more I am, the less is Christ to me." When we read this fine and true remark, our hearts leaped with the hope that it would be followed by its logical sequence, as that is exhibited in the Scriptures; but we were doomed to disappointment. We have been teaching that man's idolatry of agency —for we can call it by no gentler name—has blinded him to the assurance that Christ Himself will come, and, according to the well-defined character of the dispensation, must come before the tares can be removed, or the corrupting leaven be purged out. Our boastings of our mighty organizations are among the most ominous signs of the day. But Mr. Hebditch does not carry his thoughts in this direction. Had he done so, we should have hailed the fact with uncommon pleasure, although in that case he would not have been a representative man; and it will, of course, be understood that it is in this light, and not in that of an individual writer, that we consider him. "Peril to Christians," and "abated faith in Providence," are the sequences of this *ego*. True enough, as a description of the actual fact; but danger to the Christian life, and a diminished faith in divine Providence, are themselves symptoms of the great disease which preys upon the heart of the Church in consequence of her disbelief of the great doctrine that she should be continually looking for the return of her Lord in person. She is to occupy till He come; but she has chosen to occupy with reference to an entirely different issue,—the conquest of the world before, and independently of, His advent,—an issue for which she has no warrant; and the result is faith in herself, her head, her heart, her gold—in one word, her *egoism*.

Glancing now at the items of complaint, it is affirmed that "the Church of our times wants reverence;" that "a more serious defect in the piety of our day is its feeble evangelism;" that humility is wanting; that constraining love to Christ is rare; that it is harder than ever to deny ourselves; that we are worldly, uncharitable, unforgiving; that the *feeling* of redeemed ones is hardly ours; that the Christian will—that is, the identification of our will with God's will—is relaxed; that our prayer meetings are scantily attended and dull; that our "cultivated members never lead the devotions of their brethren at all; that those who do, show little proficiency in the holy art;" that Church meetings are miserably attended; that the nursing of young life, mutual oversight, and care for the common weal, are neglected; that family and friendly gatherings crowd out family praise and prayer; that concessions to the world on such occasions are common; that it is "more common than once to see Christian parents with

Digitized by Google

unconverted children;" that the elder members of rich dissenting families gravitate towards "the wealthy and fashionable Establishment;" that making haste to be rich in consequence of the idolatry of social status is common; that "the great mass of our people" are unwilling to give in proportion to their income; and that, "last and saddest fact" of all, conversions are lamentably few.

These are melancholy statements; and, as the writer remarks, "it is no relief to know that the same may be said of other churches also." What, then, is the remedy proposed for this "epidemic?" Mr. Hebditch is "diffident on the question of recovery." No wonder, when the soul-stirring cry, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh," is totally ignored! This animating truth, rung through the ranks of the Church, would perform wonders; but we are told that in regaining lost ground "the first thing is *to believe that we can.*" "On the Church herself the whole burden lies." But what is this but a return to the discarded *ego?* Sick at heart, and paralyzed in every limb, the invalid is to help herself, and spring up to health and beauty! To awaken in every Christian the conviction that he is responsible for the state of his own heart; to preach Christ more exclusively, and yet more variously; and to implore Christians to spend more time in the culture of their own hearts, are good suggestions as far as they go; but these suggestions have been made often before without accomplishing the desired result. The lethargy is chronic; the epidemic is widespread. How can we wonder, when the great Scripture doctrine of the Master's return is either kept entirely out of view, as in this pamphlet, or explained away by the ingenuity of the "spiritualizer," as in many a sermon? In cases not a few indeed even this miserable attempt to make the Holy Spirit say something else than the words obviously mean is not thought worth while, but sarcasm, caricature, and ridicule are deemed sufficient argument with which to dispose of that divine doctrine which apostles preached, and which is the only hope of the Church. If the Church will try every remedy in her deplorable state except that of looking for her Lord; if she will try every expedient except that which has been prescribed by the great Physician Himself; and if she is determined not to believe the special truth which sheds its glorious light on the thickest darkness of the dispensation, and solves every difficulty in a way worthy of infinite wisdom, she must even take her course, and reap the fruits of her unbelief. Why, this very book of lamentations is a clear description of the very malady superinduced by disbelief of the Lord's return. Unconsciously the author has written a vivid commentary on the signs which precede the advent. It is very remarkable that we should have this cry of cooling love, increased conformity to the world, spiritual deadness, self-esteem, deficiency of faith, and paucity of conversions, coming from a body that regards the doctrine of the pre-millennial advent with special dislike, and believes and teaches that the conversion of the world is the mission of the Church. It is a "sign" to which it is well to take heed. There is more in all this than meets the eye that looks not beyond the boundary line of denomination, and rests quietly on the received theology of a most respectable brotherhood. Complaint has a meaning as well as congratulation, and frequently in religious matters the significance of the former is deeper than that of the latter. In this paper we need not pursue the subject further, but we are quite sure that sincere love to our brethren has constrained us to make these few remarks on *the disease without the remedy.*—"*The Rainbow.*"

From the Western Recorder.

THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

BY JOS. M. WEAVER.

THE doctrine of a twofold resurrection is denied by many of those who are teachers of the Gospel. Many good men believe it to be a falsehood—some are bitter in their opposition to it, as though there was something in it hurtful to man, or dishonoring to God. They look upon those who believe and teach this doctrine, either as weak-minded or knavish, or at least *fanatical.*

Why they should so *hate* this doctrine is a mystery to me. It is honorable to God, and it

Digitized by Google

honors the saint of God in thus resurrecting him before and separate from the wicked. But the question to be decided is, *Does the Bible teach it?* If it does, we must receive it—if it does not, of course, we, as Protestants, must reject it. "To the law and to the testimony."

The Scriptures teach that there shall be a first resurrection—a resurrection of the just—of the saints—separated from the wicked in time a thousand years.

(1) There is a first resurrection. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. *This is the first resurrection.*" "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in *the first resurrection*" (Rev. 20:5, 6). Here is a plain statement of the doctrine—as plain as could be made. It is a recognized canon of interpretation of Scripture, that we shall take the plain obvious meaning of a passage, in its statement, unless the context, or some other parts of the Word, plainly demands otherwise. Does the context require us here to depart from the plain, obvious meaning of the text? Let those prove it who so assert. Are there other parts of the Word requiring us to depart from the plain meaning of the passage? We have not found them. No truth established by God's Word runs counter to this revealed truth. Why not then receive this text in its plain import—that there is a *first* resurrection. This first resurrection, of course, implies a second resurrection. The idea of this twofold resurrection is found in all parts of the Bible; and also the idea of the just rising first. Let us examine a few passages.

Christ himself, in speaking to certain ones concerning a feast, tells them to "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind," and gives as a reason, that they could not recompense them, but they should be blessed, "for thou shalt be recompensed at *the resurrection of the just*" (Luke 14:14). Why the resurrection of the just, if at the same time *all*—just and unjust—shall be raised? Why not say simply at the resurrection?

Again: Jesus, in answering the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection of any, used this language, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead (from among the dead, the original has it,) neither marry, nor are given in marriage" (Luke 20:35). Why should Christ speak of a "worthiness" for a resurrection, if *all* were to be raised? Worthy, or unworthy, all shall be resurrected, but only those who are accounted worthy to obtain that world, or age (the millennial period), will be raised at the first resurrection. Paul, in writing to the Philippians, tells them of his *efforts* to reach a certain kind of resurrection. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:11). (In the original it is much stronger, *ek toon nekroon, from among the dead.*) Why did Paul strive after the resurrection if *all* should reach it without effort? He knew that he would be resurrected whether he lived a Christian life or not, but he also knew that it was necessary to struggle to reach *the* resurrection—the first resurrection, since it was confined to the righteous or just. So might we quote many other passages of the Word to prove this point, but we deem it unnecessary. You may take your Bible and a Concordance, and examine, at your leisure, every passage which treats of the resurrection, and you will find this idea of a first resurrection—prior to the second—confined to the people of God. Wherever the two classes—the wicked and just—are mentioned together, you will *invariably* find the just mentioned *first.* Can you believe that this is by chance, or without design by the Holy Spirit? The Bible is inspired. All of it is truth. It was dictated by the Spirit of Wisdom. Each passage proceeded from infinite wisdom. No part of it—no passage—was simply thrown in to fill up, but each meant what was said—each is pregnant with instruction and important truth. Hence, when we find this truth mentioned in it, *always* and *invariably,* in the same *order,* we can but draw the conclusion that the Spirit intended to convey the idea of a twofold resurrection—the first confined to the just, the second to the wicked.

(2) *The first resurrection is a thousand years prior to that of the wicked.* This is plainly stated in the Bible. It requires no *inference* to obtain it from the Word—no argument—no straining of Scripture—it is plainly stated. Af.

Digitized by Google

ter the first resurrection, the Bible states there shall be the reign of Christ and his saints for a thousand years, and *then* the "rest of the dead," as distinguished from the saints raised, should be raised. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (Rev. 20 : 5). But we are told this is the *only* place where such a doctrine is taught. Well, is it not sufficient that God should state a truth once? Shall we require Him to state and *re*-state truth before we receive it? If God says it here, and *in plain words*, why not receive it? What is there so terrible in the thought of a first resurrection—a thousand years before the wicked? Does it take any joy from the Christian? Does it make men worse? By no means. It is a joy to the weary one of earth, stricken by the hand of death, in the person of his best friend. It leads men to seek unto it as was the case with Paul. It thrills the heart of the Christian as he contemplates the hour when with *all* the just he shall "come forth" at the call of his Lord, at his Second Advent. Let us receive the fact, then, as a revealed one—revealed for our comfort and our information. The dead in Christ shall rise first at the coming of Christ, and be forever with him. Joy and bliss shall be theirs, for "blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

HER EXPERIENCE IN STUDYING PROPHECY.

I HAVE noticed in previous letters that I did not go with Mr. Howels on the subject of the Second Advent: I could not. In fact, I was a millenarian against my will. The three particulars on which I did not believe myself to be convinced were the vengeful disposition against the Lord's enemies preparatory to the thousand years of blessedness; the literal nature of the first, pre-millennial resurrection, and the personal reign. With regard to the first, I wished to believe that the Gospel would be universally victorious, subduing every heart, and bringing the whole world in peaceable submission to acknowledge the Lord as King. I had once, as before stated, been sartled by a reference to the sixty-third of Isaiah, and lulled to sleep again by the far-fetched comments of good Matthew Henry; and I confess I had taken up the missionary cause on the gratuitous assumption that we were to convert everybody, and could not agree to a less extensive triumph. Well, I did not choose to bring this to the test of Scripture, because I did not wish to be undeceived; but just after the Irish meeting, one was held in reference to the Jews, at which I was present; and forth stepped my valued friend, McNeil, whom I had not seen for a year, and with his Bible in his hand, preached the doctrine, to my infinite annoyance and conviction! He took up my precise objection without knowing it; he spoke of those who could not see that a part of God's *mercy* was his *judgment;* and with that glowing ardor, tempered with deep solemnity, that always gives him so much of the prophetic characteristic, if I may so speak, he read from the 136th Psalm: "To him that smote Egypt in their first-born; *for his* MERCY endureth forever: and slew famous kings, *for his* MERCY *endureth forever.*" This was a key-note of a strain that I deeply felt resounded through the whole Scripture, though I had refused to heed it; and then he turned to the 61st of Isaiah, and read the first and part of the second verse, as quoted by our blessed Lord in the 4th of St. John, to where he shut the book, saying, "This day is *this* Scripture fulfilled in your ears." But did the Scripture end here? No: the first advent fulfilled so much of it; and He who then proclaimed "the acceptable year of the Lord," should at his second coming proceed with that unfinished Scripture, "The day of vengeance of our God." And go on thence "To comfort all that mourn: to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion," and so the whole beautiful picture of Millennial gladness and glory on which Isaiah expatiates rose before me, as consequent upon that "day of vengeance," which Christ has not yet in person proclaimed. How angry I felt with that dauntless champion of God's whole truth, for trampling upon my darling prejudices! nevertheless he had done it; and thenceforth I opened my mind to drink in the pure, simple meaning of the literal promise.

Digitized by Google

The first resurrection I considered to be a resurrection of the souls of the martyrs, whose spirits were to animate the happy race of believers during a thousand years. I confess some things puzzled me sorely in this interpretation: for instance, how could a soul be buried; and if not buried, how did it rise? Again, those souls were under an altar in heaven, waiting for the completion of their company by means of a new persecution on earth, and it seemed rather a heathenish doctrine to transmigrate them into other bodies; more especially as their own bodies would need them again. Besides, they were with Christ personally in heaven; and to be without Christ personally on earth, was by no means an additional privilege. I found the thing untenable, and resolved to consider it as wholly figurative; but if so, then the final judgment, described also in that chapter, might be figurative too. I would not look my own inferences in the face; so I wished to let the subject alone; but then a blessing was distinctly pronounced on such as should read or hear the words of that prophecy; and I did not like to lose a blessing.

Thus the matter stood; I had rigidly forborne to read any book, pro or con, or to be talked to about it. One day when the subject forced itself upon me, I resolved to strengthen myself against the modern view (as I wisely supposed it), by prayerfully reading again what I already so well knew—the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians. I did so: and was suddenly struck by a recollection of the passage where the "saying" is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." I turned to Isa. 25, read it, and found it unequivocally a description of the church's blessedness on earth—the Millennium—at the onset of which the saying is written which "shall come to pass," when Christ's people shall arise from the dead. But will not all rise then? I went over the apostle's description once more, and found no word of the resurrection unto condemnation. The corruptible then raised would put on incorruption; the weakness power; the mortal immortality; having borne the image of the earthly, they were to bear the image of the heavenly. I was quite overpowered: could I reply against God? The passage that I thought so formidable on my side failed me—"Afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming. *Then* cometh the end." . . . . From this starting-point I explored the Scriptures in reference to a literal resurrection of Christ's people, at a literal coming previous to the thousand years of Satan's binding and the peace of the church. I saw it clearly: I received it fully; and I hold it firmly at this day.

It has often struck me what efforts the enemy has made to stifle this doctrine. . . . But shall the abuse of a sublime truth by the great enemy lead us to reject it? As well may we blot out the ninety-first Psalm, because the devil quoted it, and for a truly devilish purpose. No: he knows that the shedding forth of greater light on this important branch of Christian knowledge is one of the signs of Christ's actual coming; a token that his own time is short; therefore he endeavors to stifle it; and ere long he will bring us false Christs, to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect. We have need to be found watching!

AS GOD WILL.

A HYMN BY JULIUS STURM.

PAIN'S furnace-heat within me quivers,
God's breath upon the flame doth blow;
And all my heart in anguish shivers
And trembles at the fiery glow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And in his hottest fire hold still.

He comes, and lays my heart, all heated,
On the hard anvil, minded so,
Into his own fair shape to beat it
With his great hammer, blow on blow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And at his heaviest blows hold still.

He takes my softened heart, and beats it;
The sparks fly off at every blow;
He turns it o'er and o'er, and heats it,
And lets it cool, and makes it glow:
And yet I whisper: *As God will!*
And in his mighty hand hold still.

Digitized by Google

Why should I murmur? for the sorrow
Thus only longer-lived would be;
Its end may come, and will to-morrow,
When God has done his work in me.
So I say trusting: *As God will!*
And, trusting to the end, hold still.

He kindles, for my profit purely,
Affliction's glowing, fiery brand;
And all his heaviest blows are surely
Inflicted by a Master-hand:
So I say praising: AS GOD WILL!
And hope in him, and suffer still.

Editorial.

THE SUEZ CANAL.

IT is known to most of our readers, that there has been in making, for some years past, an attempt to unite the waters of the Mediterranean and Red Seas, by means of an immense ship canal across the northern part of Egypt. It is now so far completed, that, since 1864, a daily boat has been run from Port Said to Suez; and a large barque, towed by a steamer, and conveying twenty to thirty passengers, has passed from sea to sea by means of it within a space of twenty-four hours. On the 5th of April last, it was to have been formally opened with appropriate ceremonies. An article in the London Times says, that about thirty of the principal Chambers of Commerce in the world, and four of the largest companies were represented on the occasion, which, it says, might have justified even a larger, a more magnificent, more public and universal gathering. The work was commenced in 1859, on a subscribed capital of some $40,000,000; and its final completion and opening to navigation for large vessels is promised for 1866,—that year so long and generally designated for so many wonders in Church and State. It is under the protection of Napoleon, and in the immediate direction of M. Ferdinand de Lesseps. It is undoubtedly one of the most stupendous works of modern times, and destined (if successful) to change things to an extent which can hardly be conceived. There is an English railroad, passing from Alexandria, through Cairo, to Suez, which has been in operation for years; but a French ship canal, severing Africa from Asia, and opening a direct way to India, at once realizes the dream of Ages, and throws open the door to commercial, political, and social results as vast as the achievement is surprising. It will rejuvenate some of the oldest of countries, alter materially the relations of the east and west of the Old World, establish the French power in Egypt, put France between England and India, change the balances of power in Europe, and add advantages and eclat to the Napoleonic schemes more potent than the arms of the first Napoleonic Emperor.

The importance of such a connection of these seas was observed from the remotest ages. Nor was this the first attempt to accomplish it. Almost before the days of authentic history, while Greece had lawgivers, and Rome had kings, Necho, the son of Psammetichus, and the conqueror of King Josiah, set about the formation of a navigable canal from the Pelusaic branch of the Nile to the head of the Gulf of Suez. Necho was a man of energy as well as enterprise, and he pushed the work with such zeal that a hundred and twenty thousand men are said to have perished in it before he desisted. And strange to say, he was induced to relinquish it in consequence of *a prophecy*, that when completed, it would yield nothing to him, but render all its profits to a stranger. Darius, perhaps thinking himself to be that stranger, undertook to finish the great work; but whether it ever was of any advantage to him, or any one else, history does not inform us. It has at any rate remained to our days of steam navigation and telegraphs to bring the great canal into shape for practical use; and the stranger to be more especially benefited is

Digitized by Google

none other than the subtle and sagacious Louis Napoleon.

One of the most remarkable things in connection with this great work is its completion in entire independence of England, her government and her capitalists, who, of all others, are the most deeply affected by it. Though invited to place confidence in M. Lesseps, and though the best English engineers reported favorably on the scheme, the moneyed men of Britain declined to invest in it, apparently supposing that nothing effective would be accomplished without their concurrence. But in spite of all discouragements, and all the opposition from English diplomacy at Constantinople and in Egypt, the astute Democratic Emperor of the French has managed to have the work brought to a state of forwardness which now seems to insure a final success, which will flank Gibraltar, cut the British lines of communication in its rear, and give to Napoleon command of the situation, to control Eastern commerce, and to order peace or war at will. The hand that holds possession of a ship canal between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, must needs direct the destinies of Egypt, draw Palestine under its sway, compel the acquiescence of England, and is already far on the way to sustain a general dictatorship for the nations. And if that hand should be Louis Napoleon's, as it will be, he will thus have a mighty instrument to aid him in his ambition to encircle the globe with his power. And whatever may happen to the canal, whether it is ever completed or not, whether fleets or not a single keel pass through it, the Times admits that it has now already given the French a footing upon the most central and commanding point of the Old World. It has been found with regard to the famous Barrage of the Nile that, though its beneficent operation is not so certain or so well under control as was hoped, it can do a world of mischief on an emergency, and is, in fact, the stronghold, the key, the citadel of the Delta. In like manner, says this writer, he who occupies the position now established in the Isthmus, can at least maintain a force in the face of three opposing continents, and stop the road to India, as well as exert a moral force rendering his friendship a thing to be coveted even at a sacrifice.

A recent editorial, in the New York Herald, directs attention to the fact that the completion of this canal must insure the supremacy of France in the Mediterranean, having now two great naval arsenals on the coast of that Sea, in higher condition than any other European power, and is likely to have a third at Algiers, she will possess a preponderance of naval strength in that region with the advantage of sudden concentration of large fleets, impossible to be effected by her neighbors across the channel. By stationing her ships off or at Corfu, she would command the Straits of Otranto, and intercept all communication between the Adriatic and the Egyptian coast, while the British at Malta would have as much as they could do to guard the channels westward which extend over a breadth of three hundred and sixty miles from the African shore to the Straits of Messina. And should Italy become the ally of France—as in all probability she will—as soon as Rome is left to herself, a common rendezvous of the squadrons of the two nations in the Adriatic would insure the success of their joint operations.

It is certain that the opening of this canal will do much for several Italian ports, which cannot long remain under the Austrian government; that the French influence in Egypt is rapidly increasing, and is now dominant there; and that Sir Henry Bulwer finds his time and strength fully occupied at Constantinople in endeavoring to combat the hourly augmenting growth of French diplomacy and power over the East in general. It is also worthy of note that Linant Bey, an eminent engineer, a man of great ability, and the principal director of the public works of Egypt, is a Frenchman; and that the fortifications at Alexandria, and at the apex of the Delta, are the work of the French.

Another item of importance, in this connection, referred to by the Herald article is, that the French have also taken possession of a strong point just outside of the Straits of Babel Mandel, which has been, or is to be, strongly

Digitized by Google

fortified, and which will countervail the British station at Aden. A line of French steamers and regular mail-packets also plies between Suez and some of the French possessions in the East Indies. And the French influence thus developing is already predominant throughout Asiatic and European Turkey, as well as in Egypt, as we have ourselves personally witnessed within the last year. There is hardly a point at which the French consuls have not more influence than the Pashas themselves. Large extents of fertile territory have also been purchased by the Suez Company, which are being profitably cultivated; towns and villages are everywhere springing up upon them; and everything is tending to arrange itself under French control and to the augmentation of French supremacy. The ideas of the first Napoleon are thus being realized; and, in the event of a rupture with England, the Pyramids may be again invoked to look on the victories of the soldiers of France; whilst French iron-clads are found equal to the task of maintaining themselves against their foe, though even another Nelson should arise to attempt another Aboukir.

On the supposition, then, that this canal will be completed in 1866, as promised; that the Atlantic cable will be successfully laid during this summer by the Great Eastern; that all nations and people in the world will then be in close telegraphic communication; that the Pope is divested of all temporal dominion, and lodged near the palace of the Tuilleries; that French monitors and iron-clads, now multiplying in secret, are found in all the great harbors of the seas; with England at war with the enemies of her colonies, and troubled with the deep-seated spirit of revolution at home; with the revolutionists of Italy, Germany, Greece, and Turkey putting forth their ideas of Democracy and Unity, and organizing for separate political life under the protection of France; with the Jews, in universal emancipation, accepting the Napoleons as their great deliverers; with Jerusalem, reviving under the combined influence of the superstitions of its ancient owners, the encouragements of a new-born commerce, and the protectorate of a power received as the subject of ancient promise; and with everything constituting the stabilities of society yielding to the revolutionary outburst of a wholly new order of things; what then will be the aspect of the world in relation to its predicted future? What then will people think of the warnings, derived from Scripture, which we have been giving them, and which they now so much despise and revile? Will men then continue to laugh at the idea of Napoleon, peradventure, being the personal Antichrist, and go on preaching the fable of a Millennium of universal liberty and peace, wrought by the ordinary agencies of so-called human progress? Alas, for the blindness that is upon the eyes of a rationalized and secularized church! Alas, for the delusions with which many good people are bewitched! Happy those who are not left unawakened till then! Happy those whose eyes are open to behold the signs of the times, and to make ready for what is at hand! God's plans are ripening fast. The great mysteries of his providence will soon be finally unfolded. His word is fulfilling with wonderful rapidity and literalness. And woe be to the one who does not speedily secure a sure footing upon God's immutable promises by a genuine penitence and a true faith in Christ Jesus.

"Acquaint thyself quickly, O sinner, with God,
And He shall be with thee, when fears are abroad:
Thy safeguard in dangers that threaten thy path;
Thy joy in the valley and shadow of death."

IMPROVEMENTS IN PALESTINE.

Much is going the rounds of the Press on this subject. The expressions used, we fear, have also conveyed to many minds much more exalted ideas than the facts will warrant. We have recently read, and have had sent us for republication, accounts of the rebuilding of Jerusalem, the widening and beautifying of its streets, of a railroad to be built from Jaffa to Damascus, *via* Jerusalem, with branches to Bethlehem, Hebron, Nazareth, &c., of carriages driven by steam to be put upon the new French road (the only proper *road* in all Syria) from Beirout to Damascus, of great waterworks to be put up at Dog River to supply Beirout, of a harbor to be constructed at Jaffa at a cost of

Digitized by Google

$1,500,000, and of the establishment of great cotton factories, universities of learning, and printing-presses at various points, of the knitting together of all sections of Syria by lines of telegraph, &c. &c. All this looks large upon paper, and is well fitted to entertain those whose eyes are towards that country, as well for its accomplished past as its predicted future; but there is not one item in all this parade but must be taken with great allowance, if people have any wish to get at the truth. We left Palestine but a few months ago, having made a complete tour of the land, and spent days and weeks in its principal cities; we, therefore, profess to have a little acquaintance with the facts.

There are, indeed, some new buildings being erected in Jerusalem; among others, one by Louis Napoleon, on the site of the old church of St. Ann, near St. Stephen's Gate. And it may be, that some rickety incumbrances of the cramped, narrow and filthy streets have recently been torn away by the Pasha's order. Outside the walls, westward, the Russians have also erected some fine substantial buildings, for the accommodation of their monks, schools, and pilgrims. But, as to any general renovation of the holy city, there are no signs. Permits and promises from the Pasha are easily enough obtained; but neither Mahomedan, Jewish, or Christian enterprise and energy are vigorous enough there as yet to warrant any such assertions or hopes as those of a general renewal of that nest of discomfort, poverty, and dilapidation.

As to the proposed railroad, there were two applications for a Firman from Constantinople for it; the one by an English company, the other by a certain Dr. Zimpel. We are not sure, whether either, neither or both of these applications have been granted; or, if granted, that there is any reliable prospect of having either of the proposed plans soon carried into effect. As to Dr. Zimpel, Dr. Barclay says, "This very learned, excellent, and benevolent brother, albeit somewhat eccentric, whom I had the happiness of baptizing in the Jordan about twelve years ago, has been spending many months and much money, too, endeavoring to procure a concession from the Sultan for this purpose." Some say he has succeeded in securing the Firman. But a much more vital element of the scheme needs yet to be secured; to wit, some five or six millions of dollars, according to his own estimate. And as Jaffa is without a harbor, and Jerusalem almost destitute of trade, we anticipate some delay in the execution of these proposals.

A telegraph has, indeed, been established from Beirout to Nablûs and Jaffa, and also between Beirout and Damascus. In some sections, also, cotton has been planted and grown, but the product has been small, and the means of manufacturing it into forms for use are of a very limited and primitive sort. Waterworks and steam-carriages are mere fancies as yet in that country. Damascus has been watered from time immemorial by the natural flow of the "Abana" through it, but it will be after this when the waters of Lycus flow in the streets of Beirout, or when newspapers are distributed in the villages of Palestine. The Sultan, who refuses to allow wharves and landings to be built in Constantinople, though at no expense to him, is hardly the man to encourage the building of costly harbors and breakwaters for the benefit of his refractory Arabs.

But a still greater hindrance to improvements in Palestine, is the jealousy between the great European powers. Whoever holds Syria, including Palestine and Egypt, must inevitably control the East. Hence, one power looks upon the movements of the other, in that region, with suspicion, and plies itself to defeat every scheme of which it has not the control. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre, for example, is now almost roofless, but it cannot be repaired, because one party will not allow the other to do it, lest a claim should be set up of having more right to it than the rest. A country which requires a Congress of nations to repair a church-roof, is not in a condition very rapidly to improve. There must come revolutions first. Let France, however, have the control or dictatorship, and more than what are now but dreams, will be speedily made realities; but only then. Meanwhile, the city of David, and Solomon, and the Temple, even the City of the Great King, continues to mourn under the foot of the alien.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. AUGUST, 1865. No. 8.

Special Contributions.

BEIROUT, LYCUS, AND LEBANON.

NOTES OF TRAVEL.

BY J. A. SEISS, D.D.

BEIROUT (perhaps the *Berothi* of Samuel, or the *Berothah* of Ezekiel, or both) afforded us a delightful introduction to the lands of the Bible. Its name may be traceable to the ancient wells (*Beeroth*) which may still be seen in this place. It is a goodly little city, full of life and industry. Its situation is beautiful, next to Constantinople. "The deep Bay of St. George sweeping around the base of the hills; the mountains of Metn and the Kesrawan on the east and northeast, rugged, steep, and lofty, shaded with pine forests, and dotted with villages, churches, and convents; the wild gorge of the Dog River, with snowy Sunîn behind and above; the sandy ridge of Brumanah and Deir el Kulâh, with the deep ravine of Nahr Beirout; the hills of El Ghŭrb, bold and bright against the southern sky, from Aleih to Abeîh, with hamlets and factories and orchards peeping over the smiling suburbs; and the city itself, with white houses seated seaward on overhanging cliffs, or grouped on shadowy terraces and commanding hilltops, or stowed away along retiring glens, half revealed, now quite concealed by crowding mulberry and parasol China trees, and waving festoons of vines, and cunning creepers of many colors; with the glorious Mediterranean all around, and ships and boats of various nations and picturesque patterns sailing or at rest;" all combine to form a picture, concerning which, Dr. Thompson, whose words we quote, adds, "you will travel far ere you find a prospect of equal variety, beauty, and magnificence." It is altogether the most pleasant city in all Syria.

We had five days of experience and observation in and around this city, and each day increased our satisfaction and pleasure. Our consul, Mr. Johnston, we found everything to be desired, and made a most agreeable acquaintance in Dr. Thompson, the accomplished author of "The Land and the Book," who very cheerfully volunteered much valuable information and advice.

It is said that the population of Beirout has been doubled within the last fifteen or twenty years, having received great accessions since the late massacres in that country, which drove multitudes of Christians thither for shelter. It has now about 50,000 inhabitants; one-third Mahometans, the rest Christians, Jews, and strangers from various nations. Like all Eastern cities, the streets are narrow, gloomy, crooked, and full of disagreeableness. The enormous cactuses and prickly pears which line its lanes and suburbs, as well as the impudent sparrows, infesting the windows and verandas of the houses, were subjects of great curiosity to us. The buildings are principally of stone, mostly with flat roofs, on which the inhabitants spend their summer evenings, and often their summer nights. The views from some of these housetops is charmingly magnificent; and the breezes, direct from the sea, there pour over one like renewing balm from heaven.

The history of Beirout does not extend to a very remote antiquity. Its greatest fame connects with our era. When Titus returned from the destruction of Jerusalem, he here cele-

Digitized by Google

brated his father's birth-day with games and gladiatorial exhibitions, in which many of the captive Jews perished. It was greatly ornamented and adorned by the elder Agrippa, who built theatres, baths, and porticos, remnants of which may still be traced. But its chief celebrity was in its schools of learning. Law, philosophy, and languages were here cultivated to a degree which rendered the place universally famous. Hither Gregory Thaumaturgus came to complete his study of civil law, and Appion the Martyr to perfect his knowledge of Greek literature. It was destroyed by an earthquake in the middle of the sixth century, and soon afterwards overrun with the desolating tornado of Mahometan conquest. From the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries, it was but little more than a wretched village. It was then rebuilt by the Druse prince, Fakhar ed-Dîn, who made it the seat of his government. It is now a place of some commercial importance, full of enterprise and promise. The French have recently completed a splendid macadamized road, connecting it with Damascus. Its principal trade is in raw silks and silken fabrics. Its people are of a good class, and there are numerous schools of the most enlightened and prosperous kind, under the direction of Christian men and women.

One of our most interesting excursions from Beirout was made, on the 5th of November, to the Nahr el-Kelb, or Dog River. We were accompanied by Consul Johnston, and an intelligent young Jew from Denmark. We had a warm ride of about six miles up the sandy shore of the Bay of St. George, and by the spot where that noted saint, ready to sell his soul for a cake, and afterwards torn to pieces for his crimes and tyrannies, is said to have killed the dragon.

The Nahr el-Kelb is the *Lycus flumen* of the old geographers, the Greek *Wolf* having given place to the Arab *Dog*. The origin of the name is hid by the mists of tradition. The bright little river dashes along through a glen which opens into the very heart of the mountain. Its banks are fringed below with dark shrubs, and crowned above with gray crags, on which is perched a Marionite convent. An old aqueduct, partly hewn in the cliff, and partly supported on tall arches, skirts the base of the northern hill, garlanded with creeping plants that have wound themselves among long stalactites pendant from the arches. So Porter describes it, and so we found it.

We reached this river by clambering over the narrow rocky pass hewn in the side of the mountain between Lebanon and the sea, the only open way from Asia Minor to Lower Syria. This pass is a sort of *neck of histories*, stretching through thousands of years, lined with tablets and inscriptions, put there by different hands, of different nationalities, in different languages, and in widely separated ages. Here Phœnician, Egyptian, Persian, Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Frank, Turk, and Arab have marched their proud armies over a space at places less than six feet wide. Here are records graven upon the rocks, from Rameses and Sennacherib to Napoleon III. Here are the wasting traces of powers before which the world many a time trembled, but of which little else remains to testify of their deeds. Were speech and recollection given them, what stories could these bald rocks tell!

Herodotus speaks of *stelæ* and *figures* left by Sesostris as monuments of his exploits in his expeditions to Asia Minor, which occurred three hundred years before David. We know from the Scriptures that at least five Assyrian monarchs either invaded this country or passed through it on their way to Egypt. Pul, supposed to be the same who reigned in Nineveh at the time of Jonah's missionary visit (2 Kings 15 : 19); Tiglath-Pileser, who took captive so many of the Jewish people (2 Kings 15 : 29); Shalmaneser, who twice invaded Palestine, and besieged and took Samaria (2 Kings 17 : 3–6; 18 : 9–11); Sargon, at least Tartan his general (Is. 20 : 1); and Sennacherib, who "came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them," and was so miraculously discomfited in a second invasion (2 Kings 18 : 13–17), are the names by which the sacred records designate them. And these memorials at Nahr el-Kelb are what these and other monarchs in succession caused to be made in commemoration of their expeditions in which they passed this difficult point. The tablet of

Digitized by Google

Sennacherib has been identified side by side with an inscription of Rameses the Great, the Sesostris of Herodotus, king of Egypt, next after him who made Joseph governor of all his house. What centuries are thus commemorated at this place—what crimes—what conquests—what tyrannies—what histories before the historic eras! There are nine tablets in all, some of which have displaced others of an earlier date. Three are regarded as Egyptian, and six as Assyrian. And to these has been added one of recent date, inscribed with the name of Napoleon III, in commemoration of his military expedition to quell the massacres in the Lebanon regions. These tablets thus connect the world's first monarchs with its last, and tell of conquests and conquerors dating through thirty centuries.

It was a pleasant hour which we spent in the cool shade on the margin of the pure Nahr el-Kelb, refreshing ourselves with tea and instructive conversation, whilst the histories of remote ages looked down upon us from the gray rocks, and the living waters, fresh from Lebanon, and foaming in the sea, regaled our eyes with their beauties, and our ears with their blended songs. Here we also met Mr. and Mrs. Mott, pilgrims from London, encamped on their return from a visit to the cedars. Not a little did they add to the satisfactoriness of this excursion. We found them to be strong and earnest Millenarians, and the more confirmed in these views by their long and extensive explorations of the holy lands. Mrs. Mott has published an interesting volume of notes of her travels in those regions. She is fully persuaded, with so many others, that Palestine belongs to the children of Israel, and that the time is near when they will be regathered to possess it under the dominion of Him who is yet to sit and reign upon the throne of His Father David, and to establish it with justice and with judgment for all the ages. We found Mr. Johnston also deeply interested in these prophetic subjects, as well as an intelligent young gentleman by the name of Moore, who spent some days with us at Beirout, and had lived for some years at Jerusalem.

Having completed all our arrangements for the tour that was before us, we bade adieu to Beirout on the bright morning of November 7th, and began our ascent for the crossing of Mount Lebanon. We took our hotel with us, and what we might need in the line of servants, horses, mules, and accommodations for a month's wandering about among the mountains and plains of Syria and Palestine. Our entire establishment consisted of three travellers, two tents, eleven horses and mules, two muleteers, a cook, a tent-servant, and a dragoman. The company was not very homogeneous. Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Mahometans, Protestants and Catholics, whites and blacks, Americans, Europeans, Asiatics, and Africans, all had their representatives in it. But it was harmonious with all, and worked to our entire satisfaction. Our dragoman, *Nejim Bocharti*, proved to be one of the very best of his class, and all under him kept punctually to their places and duties, except our ebony Abyssinian, who deserted us clandestinely between two days.

As we ascended the sides of Lebanon by the splendid French road, there was an aspect of barrenness on the country, which the drought of summer had disrobed of nearly all that greenness, which is said to be so inviting there in spring-time. The broken gray rocks were everywhere hung with terraces, on which the husbandmen were busy ploughing, digging, and putting in their seeds for next year's crops. Here and there stood stripped mulberry groves, with which the region abounds, also fig-orchards, olive-gardens, and little congregations of tall, slender pines. The views toward the sea were frequently charming, and sometimes glorious. We stopped for lunch near the summit, thousands of feet above Beirout, overlooking an immense area of olive-trees in the valley towards Sidon, also the outspread Bay of St. George, and hundreds of miles of the blue expanse of the Mediterranean. For two-thirds of the way, the city from which we started, with its white houses peeping out among the cactuses and trees, was ever coming into view. It seemed almost impossible to lose sight of it, notwithstanding the broken and irregular formation of the mountains. It ap-

Digitized by Google

peared to follow us; for it is hard to form an idea of distance in the clear atmosphere of Syria. We passed numerous little villages, dotting the hillsides in every direction, but generally stationed at the heads of the deep gorge-like valleys, as if to protect the mountain from being any further rent.

As we began to descend towards Damascus, the view to the eastward was particularly enchanting. The sun was sinking in the west, tinging everything with purple and gold. Sublime over the rest of the mountains appeared Mount Hermon, as if just come forth to bathe himself in those glorious mellow rays. The beautiful plain of Bukha, "the valley of Lebanon," lined with the meandering Leontes or Litany, and chequered with its rich and variously tinted fields, stretched out in quiet attractiveness at our feet. The half-moon displayed its silver sheen in the sky over Damascus. And the evening came on with everything to impart romantic interest to our first night in tent, pitched at Zahkleh, close to the noisy waters, as they came rushing in joyous purity from the snow-capped hills. We had spent nine hours in the saddle, and dinner and rest in our snug but novel home were quite as welcome as the visions of the day had been beautiful.

THE COMING MAN.

In the prophetic Scriptures (as indeed in all the Scriptures) there is wrapped up a manifoldness; and there has ever been a gradual and progressive and increasingly clear unfolding thereof—a fulfilment continually going forward, foreshadowing and typical. Thus even in the Apostles' days there were many Antichrists, but not THE Antichrist. So now, in our day, there are several Antichrists,—very distinct foreshadowings of the Beast; so distinct and marked as to be almost startling, and, I think, clearly showing that the coming of the Beast himself is imminent.

In Rev. 13: 18, it is said, "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the Beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is 666." Whilst this will be true in a strict sense of the Beast;—in the foreshadowing fulfilments the number may be that of men, systems, practices, or beliefs, as so many different phases of that which will be concentrated in the antitype.

The present emperor of France is a very distinct foreshadowing Antichrist. The "ten Kings" will give their power and authority unto the beast; and together they shall destroy the Papacy. Louis Napoleon is now virtually the arbiter of continental Europe; and by taking the Pope under his protection, he has undermined Papal influence throughout Europe. Louis Napoleon is also the ruler of the most atheistic people in Europe; and the subjects of the Beast must be atheists in profession *or die*. Thus *Atheos* contains the number 666. The following variations of Louis Napoleon's name also express in Hebrew, Greek, or Latin numerals, the fatal number 666: Ludovicus; Louis Napoleon in Greek characters; Napoleonti (the mark of dedication inscribed upon the subjects of the Beast—in the dative); L. N. Kalonmeros (the original family name of the Buonapartes; and Kalonmeros is Buonaparte turned into Greek); and lastly, the three words Louis Napoleon Buonaparte, in Hebrew, amount to 666. From these remarkable facts many have too hastily concluded that Louis Napoleon is the veritable Beast of the Apocalypse, on account of not apprehending the germinal character of the prophetic scriptures.

So also the Church of Rome and its practices, and the Pope, are foreshadowings of the Beast. Thus Sathor (mystery), Romiith (the Romish Church), and Lateinos (the same) express in numerals 666. So also does the inscription now chiselled upon the Pope's palace —"Vicarius Dei generalis in terris" (God's universal Vicar in the earth) express in numerals 666. So also "Vicarius filii Dei" is 666. The trifling sumptuary regulations of the Romish Church, and the prohibition of marriage to the clergy, also clearly foreshadow the stringent sumptuary regulations of the Beast and the prohibition of marriage to *all* of his subjects. From these facts many (like Dr. Cumming) have hastily concluded that the Pope is the man of sin, or the Antichrist.

The Spiritualist system is also a foreshadow-

Digitized by Google

ing of the Beast—in its sumptuary recommendations, its discouragement to marriage, and in its avowed creed. As I said before, *Atheos* is 666; and I should not be surprised if something else or somebody in that system counts 666.

Thus have we three contemporary distinct foreshadowings of the Apocalyptic Beast.

The foregoing calculations of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin numerals I have written on the authority of scholars; and I suppose they will be found correct. Many of them are from The Prophetic Times. L. W. W.

THE AGES.

Mr. Editor: My attention has been recalled to this subject by the essay which we had the pleasure of hearing in a recent synodical meeting, and also by the reference to it in a certain religious periodical. You doubtless recollect my articles on this subject, which, on account of their latitude and longitude, you rejected. I do not give you an epitome of the old, or, perhaps, the old error might again appear, and I promise to try to be brief. Hence I do not even give you a summary of the great subject, though it is one which I carefully studied about twenty years ago, and has been the theme of many long articles.

Every reader of the original must be aware of the very frequent use of *aion* and *aiones* in the Bible. What is the meaning of *aion?* Our worthy essayist, and most of the school to which he belongs, says it means *dispensation.* Our translators seem to have been unable to conjecture its true meaning, and hence the vast number of ways in which they have rendered it.

In answering this question, I have no hesitancy in saying that *it does not mean dispensation.* I will let one passage suffice to prove the inaccuracy of the interpretation, 2 Cor. 4: 4, "In whom the god of this world [*aionos*] hath blinded the eyes of them which believe not." Suppose we render it "the god of this dispensation," and the query at once rises, Was not Satan as really the god of previous dispensations as of this? Was he not as really the god of the antediluvian unbelievers as of those in the days of Saul? Neither does it ever mean *world.* The very best translation in my possession never so renders it. For my own satisfaction, I have just examined the above passage in ten different translations, and every one of them renders it *age.* Our great commentator admits that there are only two passages where it necessarily means *world,* viz., Heb. 1: 2, and 11: 3. In each of these passages it seems to me that it necessarily does not mean world. So I might say of many other translations of the word, that they are incorrect; but I shall inquire, What does the word mean? Age. In any classical work, I believe, no one would ever think of rendering it anything except *age.* The very best, and the very oldest translations of the Bible, which it has been my privilege to examine, almost invariably render it age. What then are we to understand by it, and when does this *age* terminate? The ages are God's grand divisions of eternity. Hence the oft repeated expression "for the ages," means for all ages, or all eternity. See in the original, Rom. 1: 25; 9: 5; 11: 36; 16: 27; 2 Cor. 11: 31 et al. So, also, the ages of the ages is used for all eternity. See in the original, Gal. 1: 5; Phil. 4: 20; 1 Tim. 1: 17 et al. So, also, we read of the coming ages, Eph. 2: 7.

The present age is the most frequently referred to in the Bible, and is termed *this age,* Matt. 13: 20; Mark 10: 30; see 16: 8; 20: 34 et al. It is also termed the now age [*nun aion*], 1 Tim. 6: 17; 2 Tim. 4: 10 et al. Since the commencement of the present age is expressed by *ek ton aionos,* John 9: 32, and *ap' aionos,* Acts 3: 21 et al. We also read of the end of this age, or the consummation of this age, Matt. 13: 39, 40, 49 et al. The word is also used in such a way as must necessarily imply forever or never, John 11: 26; 13: 8; 1 Cor. 8: 13 et al. As this is the age in which Satan has prevailed, and great evils prevail, and as it is the only age of which this can be said, it is called "*this evil age,*" Gal. 1: 4, and Satan is called its god, 2 Cor. 4: 4 So many other passages speak of it as the age in which evil prevails. As the next age—the eighth—is the great age in comparison of all the past,

Digitized by Google

it is emphatically called "the age of the ages," Eph. 3 : 21. And so I might go on, but I fear I will weary the reader with dry figures.

When I write of *the ages*, it is very hard for me to keep out of geology. Indeed, they give me the great key to the first chapter of Genesis. Thus, when Paul says, "By whom also he made *the ages*," Heb. 1 : 2. I understand all that was made during the six creative or demiurgic days. So, also, when he says, "By faith we understand that *the ages* were framed by the word of God," Heb. 11 : 3. This age commenced shortly after the creation of man, and closes with the Millennium, or shortly after. Its duration is seven thousand years, and therefore each of the rest is of the same definite length. When this evil age shall have closed, God will recommence his great work of creation from which he has rested since the close of the sixth day, Rev. 21 : 5 et al. Previous to that will be the times of restitution, during which all that the holy prophets say will be restored shall be. All the holy prophets have spoken of the restitution, and many of them have written of it, Acts 3 : 19–21. The restitution lay very near the heart of every holy prophet; and hence it was with them the theme of themes.

But what is the restitution? Scott says of the original word *apokotastasis*, that it means the restoring of a thing to the state from which it has fallen. Then everything which holy prophets say will be restored shall be restored to that state from which they have fallen. This age commences with the fall, and ends with the restitution,—the rise. The restitution will not be instantaneous, for Peter speaks of *times* of restitution. Its duration will, doubtless, be during the whole time of the Millennium, or from the first binding of Satan until the final exit of everything which offends into the bottomless pit.

What will be restored? All that the holy prophets say will be, nothing more. It will prove interesting and profitable for you, reader, to search all the records of the holy prophets, and see what they say will be restored. You need not fear any danger from searching them. In brief, we may say everything which has suffered from the fall, except Christ-rejecting men, will be restored.

Various prophets tell us the earth will be restored. Hence we are told, Rev. 22 : 3, "And there shall be no more curse." Perhaps, Isaiah has said more than any other prophet respecting the earth's restitution. A part of the human family will be restored. Hence we read, Rev. 5 : 9, 10, "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth." See Ps. 37 : 9, 11, 22, 27, 29, 34; Matt. 5 : 5 et al. The tree of life, or of the lives, will be restored, Rev. 22 : 2. Hence among all the generations of that age there will be no death, sorrow, crying, nor pain, Rev. 21 : 4. The kingdom of the heavens will be restored, or, more properly, earth will be restored to the great brotherhood of the heavens, and be again a loyal province of God's great kingdom; and hence his will will be done on earth as it is done in the heavens. Everything which mars the harmony of the great brotherhood of intelligences in God's great family will be removed. Hence as there is only one great Father in the heavens, so there will be one united, harmonious brotherhood among his children.

J. B.

THEY WHO LOVE.

BY SARAH J. C. WHITTLESEY.

They who love shall meet again,
Where the white clouds wander,
O'er the radiant azure plain,
Arching smoothly yonder;
Where erratic meteors red
Wade the night-seas overhead.

Down upon the ocean-rim,
With the loved we've parted,
Watching o'er the waters dim,
Wild and weeping-hearted;
Yearning for the light of eyes
Caught from earth to Paradise.

O'er the golden drops of light,
From the Angels' soft wings shaken,
Sparkling through the purple night,
On the farther shore we'll waken;
And beyond life's stormy main,
They who love shall meet again.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE NEW DISPENSATION.

THE Scriptures indicate that great and momentous changes are to take place in God's administration over the world at the commencement of Christ's millennial reign, when all people, nations, and languages are to become obedient to his sceptre. They everywhere represent, in the most specific and emphatic manner, that the days that are immediately to precede that epoch are to be the last days of the present dispensation during which Satan, the prince of the power of the air, exerts a predominating sway over men; the great systems of idol-worship and false Christianity prevail; the evil continue mixed with the good, like tares with wheat; and the malign principles and passions of the wicked are left to work out their character and fruits, and show that men are in reality in that alienation from God, and need of a gratuitous salvation, which Christ's intervention represents, and makes the ground of his redemptive work. They expressly represent, also, that the former things—sorrow, pain, crying, and death—are then to pass away, and all things are to be made new; and specify among the former things that are thus to pass—the reign of the apostate and persecuting powers of Christendom, the systems of idolatry and other false worships, the tempting agency and presence of Satan, ignorance, and delusion; and they indicate also a number of the new things that are then to take place, such as the personal coming and reign of Christ in glory, the resurrection of the holy dead, and reign with him, the restoration of Israel, the communication to all nations and individuals of the knowledge of Christ, their universal conversion, and the discontinuance of wars, violence, and evils of every form,—which show that the administration that is then to be instituted, will differ very widely from the present, and may justly be denominated a new dispensation.

What, however, is meant by its being a new dispensation? Not, as disbelievers in Christ's reign often represent, that a new method of redemption is then to be instituted, or a new method of delivering men from sin. No statement could be more mistaken. The object of the new administration is not to supersede the work of Christ by some other method of atonement or justification, but to apply his redemption on a vastly greater scale; to extend its blessings to the whole population of the globe. Its aim is to give efficacy to the means of exempting men from temptation; enlightening, convincing, and renewing them; transforming them to wisdom and righteousness; and elevating them in every excellence, in a measure altogether transcending what the church has yet seen, and commensurate with the necessities of all the nations and individuals of the race;—not to set aside those means and influences, and reform and purify them by other instruments and agencies. Christ will then be the expiation, righteousness, and Redeemer of his people, and in a far higher sense to their thoughts and affections than he has hitherto been; the Spirit will still be the sole renewer and sanctifier of the redeemed, and far more consciously to them, and with far more resplendent displays of his power, wisdom, and love than now; and the Gospel will still be the glad news of salvation, and its truths the great instrument, in the influences of the Spirit, of convincing, enlightening, and purifying the heart, and kindling it with the holy affections which are the fruits of his agency. But it will be a new dispensation, because, on the one hand, of the perfect exemption which the race are then to enjoy from the tempting arts of Satan, and of cruel and wicked men; and on the other, of the presence of Christ, new and higher means of instruction and impression, and the immeasurably more copious and efficacious influences of the renewing and sanctifying Spirit, by which those means are to be applied to the illumination and transformation of men. In these relations, it will be far more emphatically a new dispensation than either the Mosaic or Chris-

Digitized by Google

tian was in regard to that which preceded it. Its peculiarities will be much more numerpus and important; its influences will be far more extensive. The Mosaic dispensation was confined in its design and effect almost exclusively to the Hebrews. The Christian has, in fact, been confined almost absolutely to the nations living within the limits of the ancient Roman empire, and those that have intermixed with or sprung from them. On the vast population of Central and Southern Africa, of Eastern and Northern Asia, of the islands of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and the numerous aboriginal tribes of this continent, scarce a ray of its light has ever fallen. The new dispensation is to pour its effulgence on every part of the globe; is to exert its life-giving power in every human breast.

That the most important changes are to be introduced in the administration of the world, at the time when it is thus to become the scene of Christ's kingdom, in contradistinction from the kingdom of Satan and of apostate and hostile men, is taught in a great number of passages. Thus it is shown in Daniel 7 : 9–27, that at the time that the nations of the earth are to become the subjects of Christ's sceptre, he is to come in the clouds of heaven, and be invested with the dominion of the world, the powers denoted by the beast of ten horns are to be arraigned and destroyed; and the saints of the Most High, whom the little horn had prevailed against and worn out, by persecution and martyrdom, are to take the kingdom, and reign with him forever and ever.

The institution of the rule on which Christ is to enter at his investiture with the dominion of the earth, here foreshown, is not to commence anterior to the destruction of the hostile powers denoted by the wild beast; for the eleventh horn, which made war with the saints, is to prevail against them until the Ancient of days comes, and judgment, that is, judicial authority, is given to the saints of the Most High, and the time arrives that they are to possess the kingdom. The reign of Christ and the reign of the beast are not to be contemporaneous; but the reign of Christ is to follow that of the beast, and to commence when his career ends. In like manner, the conversion of the nations to Christ's rule is not to precede his coming in the clouds of heaven and investiture with the dominion of the world. Why should he be invested with the sceptre of the earth ages after it has been his kingdom, and yielded to his sway? But he is to receive the earth as his kingdom, and be invested with authority over it as the Son of Man, in order that all people, nations, and tongues *may* serve him. Their obedience is to be the consequence and work of his sway; not his dominion and sway the consequence of their conversion and obedience.

Here is then a clear and indubitable revelation that, at the time that all nations are to become subjects to Christ, he is to institute a kingdom on the earth that is to be unlike any that previously existed, and enter on an administration that, in form and efficiency, will differ very essentially from any that preceded it. It will be ushered in by the destruction of the powers denoted by the wild beast, and by his coming in the clouds of heaven, receiving the earth as his kingdom, and causing all its people and nations to submit to his sceptre; and it will be marked by his personal reign over them, by the reign with him of the saints of the Most High who had been persecuted and slain during the power of the beast; by the conversion and obedience to him of all nations and tongues; and by a continuance forever; and these and other great measures revealed in other prophecies, which are to be adapted at the same period, are emphatically to constitute his administration a new and peculiar one.

It is to be new and peculiar, because Christ is to reign over the nations in person. As the earth is then to be his kingdom, he is to be its King, in place of the usurping, slaughtering, and oppressing rulers symbolized by the four wild beasts; and he is to reign here and visibly, not as he now does in a distant part of the universe beyond the sphere of our sight. Why should he be constituted the king of the earth, and be exhibited as entering on a new and eternal reign over it, if he is then to be no more its king than he was before, and reign over it in no different form? If he is not then in fact on the earth any more than he now is, and does

Digitized by Google

not reign over it in person and visibly any more than he now does, how will he any more be its king, to the exclusion of all others, than he is now? If earthly monarchs are then to reign over the nations, and as absolutely as they do now, though more wisely, why will they not be the kings of the earth, in contradistinction from Christ, enthroned in a different and distant world, as much as the present monarchs of the earth are?

It will be a new and peculiar administration, because there will then be no conspiring and bloody monarchs, not only in the ten kingdoms ruled by the beast, but, as we learn from other prophecies, in no part of the world, Isaiah 2: 4–18, who will employ themselves in making war on their fellow-men, slaughtering them, crushing them with oppression, and enticing or forcing them to apostatize from God, and pay their homage to idols and false deities. The universal abolition of other worships is indeed implied in the subjection of all nations to Christ. The false religions that have prevailed in the world for four thousand years, have been mainly instituted, sustained, and propagated by the arbitrary and cruel rulers of the nations. Their priests have been the instruments of those monarchs, and their bloody and profligate rites the means of augmenting their power, and keeping the people in submission to their will. The idolatries of Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome were all instituted and fostered by the governments, and owed to them their authority and perpetuation from age to age. What a stupendous change in the condition of the race will the extinction of all those false religions form; and their extinction by the personal presence of the Son of Man in the glories of his deity, as the Creator and Redeemer of men, and the only proper object of their homage! How infinite the influences that are to spring from it!

It will be a new and peculiar administration, because the saints of the Most High are to take the kingdom along with Christ, and reign with him forever and ever. The saints who are thus to receive judicial authority, and to possess the kingdom, are not saints in the natural life, but those are at Christ's coming to be raised from the dead, and exalted to thrones, and reign with him, as is foreshown in the vision of the first resurrection, Rev. 20: 4–6. This is seen from the consideration, that they are the identical saints on whom the eleventh horn of the beast made war, prevailed over, and wore out by persecution and slaughter during the long period of its reign symbolized by a time, times, and the dividing of a time, or twelve hundred and sixty years. That they are not the saints in the natural body, is seen also from the consideration that all the nations, that is, all in the natural life, are to be their subjects. If they are saints in the natural life, as all in this life are to be saints, there would be no subjects over whom they could reign. They are to be risen and glorified saints, therefore, as is foreshown, Rev. 20: 4–6, who are then to be invested with kingly authority, and given to reign with Christ. And that will be a measure that has no parallel in the present administration of the world, and will be fraught undoubtedly with immense and propitious influences.

It will be a new and peculiar administration, because all people, nations, and tongues will be obedient to Christ. There not only will not be any tyrannical and bloody monarchs, any apostate and persecuting church, nor any false religions; but there will not be any irreligious and demoralized communities, any deceitful and deluding teachers, nor any wicked families nor individuals. All people, nations, and tongues are to serve the Son of Man, and all dominions under the whole heaven be obedient to his sceptre. What a stupendous change! Every false belief swept from existence! Every selfish and ferocious passion hushed in eternal silence! Every breast swayed by rectitude, wisdom, and love, and seeking to promote the intelligence, purity, virtue, and happiness of all others, and finding a lofty and perfect bliss in Christ and his kingdom!—*Theol. Rev.*

LUTHER ON THINGS TO COME.

From Muerer's "Life of Luther," pp. 572–574.

ONCE, as his little dog was begging before the table, some one proposed the question, whether there would also be irrational animals

Digitized by Google

in yonder world, as there are in this? "Assuredly," said he, "for the new Heaven and earth will not be desolate and waste, but filled with beautiful creatures. The redeemed from among men will be adorned with true and perfect wisdom, righteousness, splendor and glory of the Lord Christ, which as yet no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, and no heart conceived."

In the year 1541, when, during a very beautiful spring, everything flourished and bloomed, Luther said to Justus Jonas, "If only sin and death were absent, we would be satisfied with such a paradise. But it will be much more beautiful when the world and the old state of things will be entirely renovated, and an eternal spring begin, which will be and continue forever."

The computation of those who confidently fixed the year and the day of the final judgment being once referred to, he said, "No, verily, the text is too plain in Matthew 24: Concerning the day and the hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, but alone my Father; therefore neither I, nor any man, nor angel, can fix the day or the hour. I believe, nevertheless, that all the signs which are to precede the last day have already happened. The Gospel is preached throughout the world; the child of perdition is revealed, and destroyed in the hearts of many; the kingdom of Rome is declining to its fall; all the elements and creatures are in commotion, and declining; there is no longer any love or fidelity on earth, and Christ may come when he may, he will find but a small flock of believers; excess in eating and drinking, the practice of usury, anxious cares, covetousness, extravagance in dress and building, and all manner of irregularity, verily being as prevalent now as they were at the times of Noah; wherefore I conceive that the signs preceding the last day are fulfilled. Unless it should be that Gog and Magog, together with the Papacy, should yet be crushed and destroyed previously, in a temporal respect, too, and that particular and supernatural darkness should perhaps be witnessed in the sun and moon, as was the case at the death of Christ, and that the Gospel should, previously to the last day, be banished from all the churches, schools, and pulpits, and be found only with pious heads of families, within their four walls, as it was at the times of Elijah, and as it verily almost seems it will be now. Otherwise, everything is fulfilled which is to precede the last day. Methinks Christ our Lord is already publishing His summons in heaven, and the angels are preparing for the journey, and because during these six hundred years all the great and marvellous events of which Elijah prophesied have occurred in the spring and about Easter, I trust Christ will also appear about Easter, and cause His voice and thunder to be heard in a morning tempest, and then with one stroke, confounding the heavens and the earth, in a moment of time transform the living, raise the dead, create a new heaven and earth, hold His judgment in the clouds, wholly fulfil the Scriptures, together with His last: *It is finished;* THIS WE AWAIT."

Editorial.

THE ADVENT DOCTRINE.

ITS UNPOPULARITY ACCOUNTED FOR.

WE do not propose, in this article, to present the Scripture proofs for the doctrine advocated in these pages; but, by God's help, to examine it in its relations to the whole scheme of Christian doctrine. We shall find that it is not only essential to that scheme, but that the prevalent opposition to it is due to the same causes that lead the mass of men to reject the Gospel of the grace of God.

The scheme of Christian doctrine revealed in the Scriptures may be regarded in two aspects: 1st, in its relations to the individual man; and 2dly, to man in the aggregate, to communities, and to race.

Let us examine, first, its testimony as to the individual, his condition by nature, and the only way he can be saved. All orthodox Christians agree that it represents his natural condition as one of utter depravity and ruin. And what way of salvation does it propose? Here,

Digitized by Google

again, all agree that the curse of our sins has been borne by Jesus, who, by the one perfect offering of himself, hath forever put away sin. But there is another feature in this divine scheme which is not so clearly and universally recognized. It is, that the same grace that puts me into the place of the cross, with Christ, so that his death avails for me, puts me also into the place of crucifixion to the world. Dead with Christ, I am expected also to be risen with him into newness of life. And here comes out the meaning of the great cardinal fact of Christ's resurrection. In his death as our substitution, the old, corrupt form of humanity was condemned, put to death, and set aside. At his resurrection, a new, pure, imperishable type was produced. And all believers in Him are made partakers of this new life of which He is the Head and Fount.

The plan of redemption, then, as applied to the believer, involves,

1st, The condemnation of his human nature as utterly worthless and depraved;

2d, Its virtual death in the person of Jesus, our substitute;

3d, Its new creation, in the power of his resurrection.

It is important to observe in this connection the true doctrine of sanctification.

This divine scheme does not propose to sanctify the old man, the flesh. On the other hand, it proceeds upon the fact that the thing is impossible. It does not put new wine into old bottles, or sew new cloth into an old and worn-out garment. It repudiates the old nature, and furnishes a new. He who does not perceive this fails to apprehend the meaning of Christ's resurrection, or to come into proper sympathy with it, as implying his own virtual crucifixion and resurrection with Him. Hence, many believers regard sanctification as a gradual improvement of the flesh, and spend their lives in a weary, fruitless effort to effect it. Flesh remains flesh to the end. It will never be anything else than the same corrupt thing it was at birth. Its proper end is the grave. Sanctification is the developing into conscious strength and control the new and pure and perfect life we receive from Christ; and its proper end is the resurrection of the body.

The divine scheme of salvation then proceeds, from the first, upon the repudiation of the present form of humanity, derived from Adam, as worthless, and proposes to regenerate and resurrect it in a new form of life of which the second Adam is the source. It is from a failure to perceive clearly these cardinal features, that in our modern Christianity, the doctrine of the resurrection is partly set aside. Many seem content to regard the resurrection of Jesus as simply God's testimony and seal to his atoning work. And for themselves, their hope is not resurrection, but death, and an ideal Heaven to which it introduces them. After their entrance there, they hardly see the use or meaning of a subsequent resurrection of the body. And hence, of course, such Christians can have little real love for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

2. What the Scriptures testify as to every man, they repeat in reference to the men organized in great communities, and to the race. As salvation is not possible to the individual without the setting aside of nature, and a new creation from above, so does the promised "regeneration" of society involve the repudiation of all human systems, and the revelation of the divine.

The Bible throughout directs our faith and hope to a coming restitution of all things. As there is salvation for the individual through Christ, so is there redemption for the race. The Word of God teaches that his purpose of redemption comprehends all human relations, and even the physical system to which they belong. We are right, therefore, in looking for a time when not only man, but all human systems, social, governmental, will be perfect. The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdoms of Christ and of his saints. A commonwealth, whose metropolis is the eternal city of the heavens, is to rule and possess all things. All Christians agree in these general statements. But all do not perceive that the divine plan necessitates the repudiation of all existing systems, because, like the individuals

Digitized by Google

that design and compose them, they are corrupt and worthless, and the revelation of a new system from above. Christians hug the vain delusion of a possible regeneration of society, and of the human fabric through the improvement of existing forms, thus belying the testimony of God concerning them, and emasculating the Church's hope of that divine system He has promised to reveal at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Even as far back as Abraham, God's plan seems to have been better understood than now. He evidently did not expect the promises to be fulfilled to him until after resurrection. He looked for that city which is to come, and that divine commonwealth of the future in which the saints of God, the dead and the living, should be gathered to enjoy the blessing of that happy time of restitution of which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his prophets since the world began.

Hence he confessed himself a stranger and a pilgrim here, his citizenship in heaven. But most Christians, nowadays, look for a millennium on the earth before resurrection.

It does not enter into the plan of this essay to explain the relation of the resurrected saints to the restored earth. For this we refer to an article in the April number on the "World to Come." We wish now to bring out the truth, that those who look for a millennium on the earth, before the coming of Christ and the resurrection of the saints, fail to perceive a most vital point of Christian doctrine, viz., that redemption is not possible for man, or for the race, except by a previous repudiation and new creation. "As the body is dead because of sin," so are all existing systems of society incapable and worthless. They cannot be carried over into the new order of things to come. As individuals cannot be saved without regeneration, no more can the world be saved without resurrection. There must be a new and holy nation "manifested," of men created anew in Christ Jesus, a new type of humanity prepared to administer the authority and blessings of the new kingdom. Any other doctrine than this proceeds upon a false conception of what man is by nature, and all the organizations of men, the states and empires of this world. The depravity of the individual must inhere in the mass. And if the old nature of the man must be set aside and put into the place of death, so must all the commercial, social, and even ecclesiastical fabrics of man's devising be shaken down, to make room for that kingdom which cannot be moved. But it is asked if the majority of those that compose a state become regenerated, or if Christians be raised to its posts of authority and influence, will not the improvement for which we hope be at least begun? We reply, the Christian scheme is not to improve, but to reject the old and create the new.

The individual believer is taught that his old nature is to be kept in the place of crucifixion, and to earnestly look and patiently wait for the time of deliverance from it, when Christ shall appear, and he shall be like Him. So are we taught that all systems erected on the platform of this present evil world partake of its evil, that their proper end is destruction, that our hope for the world is not to be realized in this way, but in the manifestations of a celestial polity, a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The divine plan, as revealed even to the patriarchs, for the world's redemption, turns upon resurrection. The preaching of Christ raised from the dead by the apostles had this meaning. And for Christians now to virtually set aside the testimony, by looking for a golden age on the earth, before the coming of Christ to raise the just, looking to present systems as adequate thereto, is a grievous departure from the faith once delivered to the saints.

And here we see why the doctrine of the resurrection and the second coming of Christ is displaced, in modern preaching, from the prominence given it in apostolic times. Another hope, a false hope, a delusion of the wicked one, has been substituted,—a hope that makes the Church and the Christian more content with this world, and less earnest for that to come. And we need not wonder that the doctrine of the new birth is so universally despised or ignored. If society is to be sacred without God's plan of resurrection, why not the individual without regeneration?

Digitized by Google

If this world can be improved into a millennium, why may not the natural man be cultured and made fit for heaven?

And hence the almost universal sentiment, but feebly rebuked by the Church, that if a man is good by nature, and acts his part well in society, he is safe enough for the future.

Surely a reformer, a good citizen, who does much for the improvement of his fellow-men, needs no other passport to heaven. If the Church knew and looked for the only way in which this longed-for improvement is possible, if she knew the meaning and the power of Christ's death and resurrection, if she would turn away from idols and vain ideals to serve the living God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, her testimony for the great cardinal facts and doctrines of his word would not be so confused and so easily set aside.

We discover then here the great reason why the doctrine of Christ's second coming is so unpopular. It is unpopular with the world for precisely the same reasons that the Gospel of the grace of God is not popular. We have seen that this Gospel condemns man, and makes him entirely dependent on God. It humbles nature and self in the dust. The natural man does not like this. He hates it, and will hate it to the end, unless God gives him a new heart. So does the world hate a doctrine which proclaims the worthlessness of all human systems, which declares that all its proud fabrics are built on a rotten foundation, and must totter to their fall. The hardest thing for man to learn is to give up all self esteem and self trust, to be saved as a pure act of grace. So it is impossible for the world to give up admiring its own schemes, and boasting of its own achievements, and confiding in its own resources. The god of this world will not suffer this until he is "bound," nor will the world be convinced until the destructive judgments of that day in which every one that is proud and lofty shall be humbled, and the Lord alone exalted. But why is this doctrine so generally rejected by the professing Church? The only reply to this is, because in these last times she is in awful alliance with the world. She is developed, in the first place, in great ecclesiastical systems, which are, more or less, connected with the State, and whose prosperity and perpetuity are partly, at least, identified with it. And then, again, the pride which is native in every human breast, is constantly appealed to and gratified in the endeavor to build up these systems, and to accomplish through them the promised reformation.

Even Christians cannot readily receive a testimony which requires that all their systems be also set aside. They admire their own great fabrics as do the world, and are led to acquiesce in the same delusion that the Lord can accomplish his work through them without coming to erect, on their ruins, his own holier temple. Not only all the great empires of the world, but that great spiritual confederation, styled in the prophetic Scriptures Babylon, and all those church systems that partake of her spirit, and mark out the earth for their inheritance, attempting to realize the kingdom of Christ on earth, without waiting for his appearing, shall be thrown down. Hence, of all churches, that of Rome has been most persistent and bitter in opposing the true doctrine of that blessed hope.

In brief, it may be laid down as a general principle that the more worldly a church or a Christian, the less inclined to this doctrine. It is a protest against the world, against human nature in its present depraved form, against society, governments, and, for the most part, churches, as at present constituted. It proclaims the necessity and gives the promise of something better. Of course, the more one finds the present system of things congenial to his tastes, the more he suffers it to become the theatre for his covetousness or ambition, the less he desires the coming of another. We repeat, then, this doctrine is unpopular for precisely the same reasons that the doctrines of grace are unpopular. It condemns man, his vain theories, and self-sufficient efforts, and imposing systems. The preaching of the coming of the Lord is a constant protest against them. It proclaims their insufficiency and inherent weakness. It declares that they are built upon the sand, that the finger of God has already inscribed them for destruction. It pronounces all the world's apparent success in self-aggran-

Digitized by Google

dizement, temporary and unreal, needful discipline indeed, but destined to end in failure, that so it may be prepared to receive and rejoice in that salvation to be revealed when the desire of all nations shall come.

It follows, from what has been said, that there is a wide, if not an essential difference in the faith of Christians, as they stand related to this doctrine. One's view of it modifies his whole conception of the Christian scheme. It is usual for Christians who reject this doctrine to tolerate it in their brethren as a harmless conceit. But, if true, it is vital. If we are right, they are fearfully wrong. Their entire conception of the doctrine of Christ, of the present relation of the Church to the world, is vitiated. If this doctrine be true, to deny it, is to be led astray by the error of the wicked. We cannot, therefore, have the charity for their views they profess for ours. The two systems diverge at the very first principles of Christian doctrine. The individual is but the microcosm of the race. If the gradual improvement theory be correct, it can be applied to one as well as the other. If the promised "regeneration" of society and of the race can be accomplished before the resurrection of the just, then why may not the individual be regenerated without partaking of Christ's risen life? If it be the divine method to leaven all existing forms, without the revelation of a new, then is the sanctification of the individual not a casting off, a crucifixion of the old man, and a creation of the new, but its gradual improvement. The truth of God as to this matter is, that as the Christian is to count himself "dead" in the old life, his new life hidden with Christ in God, and to be manifested at His appearing, so must he regard all the outward forms the world takes on its states and empires, as put into the place of death in Christ's death, to be thrown off as effete and worthless at His appearing, and that this event is its only true hope. For the Christian to be diverted from this hope by the world's vain theories of progress and reform, is to miss the meaning of God's testimony as to the world's condition and capabilities, and as to His one and only method of salvation.

L. C. B.

THE WANE OF FAITH.

A SYMPTOM OF COMING JUDGMENT.

"Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—LUKE 18: 8.

WE feel very sure, that, if Christ were to come now, he would find the system of Christian doctrine, as popularly held and taught, most sadly out of joint, and so confused and indefinite as to be almost without one positive feature. There are many who believe, and believe the truth, and contend earnestly for it. But the common so-called Christian mind is full of darkness, incertitude, and misgivings. This no careful observer can doubt. What was once settled as fundamental orthodoxy has, in various particulars, become strangely disturbed. The old ways of thinking no longer fit or satisfy or command unfaltering consent. Says a prominent Unitarian doctor, "Compare the sacred literature of our day—the published sermons of all denominations, the religious newspapers of all the sects—with the Bodies of Divinity, the articles of faith, the catechisms and creeds, of fifty, a hundred, and five hundred years back. Notice the contradictions, the inconsistencies, the vacillations, of theological opinion, in all statements of our time,—how vague the language chosen, how uncertain the note struck, how many the loopholes of evasion! Examine the children of the Sunday-schools of all orders, and see whether they are indoctrinated in any positive system. Try if you can get a definite declaration of theological faith from your intelligent friends of any denomination. Question the professed teachers of religion, and notice how slowly, how guardedly, how vaguely, they answer direct inquiries."

It would seem as if nobody knew any more what to believe, and as if those who profess to believe are too unsettled and uncertain to avow anything with confidence. There has been an almost universal loosening of old moorings, a breaking away from the firm fastenings of other days, and a drifting no one can tell whither.

In a recent London book, on "The Religious Tendencies of the Age," it is said, "The edge of our religious belief has been dulled, the objective truths of religion are comparatively ignored, the sterner features of Christianity are

Digitized by Google

veiled and passed over. If we examine the religious tone of our popular authors, or if we observe the general feeling of society, we shall find that an eclectic system, consisting of the more attractive doctrines of Christianity combined with the latitudinarian philosophies, is everywhere the predominant belief."

In an article of the *Westminster Review*, for October, 1860, there is this startling statement, and the more startling for having so much truth for its basis: "The Newspaper, the Review, the tale by every fireside, is written almost exclusively by men who have long ceased to believe. So, also, the school-book, the text-book, the manuals for the study of youth and manhood, the whole mental food of the day; science, history, morals, and politics; poetry, fiction, and essay; the very lesson of the school, the very sermon of the pulpit. And all this is done beneath a solemn or cynical hypocrisy. How long shall this last?"

The editor of one of the leading journals of the Episcopal Church recently made the following observations in an article on Passion Week and Easter:

"It is the sad truth, that the precision of doctrine is departing greatly from our modern Christianity. In the infancy of the various sects, their standards were as clear as our own on the essential verities of the Faith. They took that clearness with them, as a treasure, from the Church they left. Indeed, in many cases, the standards, the *books* and *confessions*, retain that clearness very greatly yet. But, as time passed, this clearness and precision faded away from the actual living teaching. It may remain in the *standards;* but it is not found in the *pulpits*. The 'Confessions,' the 'Creeds,' the 'Catechisms,' the 'Platforms,' the 'Disciplines,' teach one thing; the pulpits teach quite another. Presbyterianism in the pulpit is not Presbyterianism in 'the Confession of Faith.' Methodism in the pulpit is not the Methodism of 'the Discipline.' Congregationalism, alive and talking, is not the Congregationalism of 'the Platform.'

"The doctrine of the ATONEMENT, the very centre and heart of the Faith, has lost its hold, beyond anything we dream, on our 'common Christianity.' We do not speak only of the fifteen hundred or more 'Churches,' of Puritan origin, 'Congregational' in name still, where the doctrine and the fact are, in so many words, *denied*. Sad as that may be, it is not the saddest. The terrible Puritan apostasy is a visible evil; but it only indicates an evil vastly greater, which is gradually working to the light.

"In pulpits still accounted 'orthodox' the doctrine has lost its reality. The precision of statement is gone. In some vague way there may have been what one might call an atonement. But the clear fact that the LORD JESUS CHRIST died *instead* of men, bore their penalty and their shame, paid their debt and cancelled their account, the guiltless for the guilty; that he stood in man's place, a real vicarious sacrifice, satisfying divine justice; that this clear fact has faded, or is fading, into metaphor and figure and vagueness, no man acquainted with the general drift of sectarianism can deny.

"And the other fact and doctrine that conclude and sign and seal the atonement, these follow into the same vagueness. The Congregational paper of Illinois has been writing systematically against the resurrection and the general judgment for months past, and we have heard no word of warning or of protest. It has declared that there is no resurrection of the flesh, in so many words: that the soul's going to heaven, immediately after death, is all there is. The body is not needed at all.

"And this is not the only case. Evidently the mass who have accepted the folly and blasphemy of 'Spiritualism,' could have done so only because they had never been trained in any belief in the resurrection. The common teaching about the state after death, that the good go at once to heaven and the bad at once to hell, has made the resurrection superfluous and led to the denial of its existence. Why bring a saint of ten thousand years' standing out of heaven, or a sinner, of as many, out of hell, to go through the farce of a judgment, or receive the useless clog of a body? In truth, we question seriously whether the mass of the members of the so-called 'Evangelical Churches' are not utter unbelievers in that article of the creed, '*I believe in the resurrection of the body.*'"

Digitized by Google

Another of our exchanges remarks, "It is very evident that there is about the same evidence that the theological world is ready to break up in confusion, as there is of political revolutions. Old and established points of doctrine are surrounded by doubters and opposers, and but few defenders. Reason is substituted for revelation, and infidelity for faith. Skeptics are multiplying all about us and growing bolder every day, while professed Christians are sleeping and slumbering in the midst of these great perils. A great change is at hand."

As a further illustration of the condition of the public mind on the great items of the faith, we may also refer to a particular in the proceedings of the late Congress of the United States. Some Christians, troubled with regard to the atheistic character of the Constitution, had sent in their earnest appeals to have such changes made as would unequivocally acknowledge the existence and sovereignty of Almighty God. The petition on the subject was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, consisting of Lyman Trumbull, of Illinois, Lafayette Foster, of Connecticut, J. C. Ten Eyck, of New Jersey, Ira Harris, of New York, J. M. Howard, of Michigan, and L. W. Powell, of Kentucky; who were to consider the subject and report upon it. It was hardly to be supposed that so simple a request with respect to so elementary and vital a doctrine would have remained without some sort of response to meet the feelings of the petitioners. The governments of ancient Rome, of Egypt, and of even the barbarous tribes of Germany, had woven into them some distinct acknowledgment of an all-powerful hand. Socrates bowed in his theology to some divine logos, and moved the recognition of Deity in the civil policy of Greece. Mahomet saw the eminent propriety of officially recognizing some overruling power. Yet, in the Senate of a country priding itself in its enlightenment, its civilization, its advancement in everything praiseworthy, its Christianity, and its mission to convert and regenerate the world, Mr. Trumbull, on behalf of himself and the other members of the committee, asked to be discharged from the further consideration of a petition for the recognition of a Supreme Being in the Constitution of the United States. The request was, we believe, granted, and the petition cast under the table! So much for the civilization, the morality, and *the faith* of a land which, while drenched in blood, helpless in the hands of Deity, yet would, through his appointed officers, refuse in its agony even to acknowledge definitively an Almighty Power, or to accept into its fundamental law the doctrine of the existence and supreme authority of God. On what are people building their hopes?

And how is it with regard to the personal return and reign of the Lord Jesus? How many sneer at the very idea, and laugh at the people who believe it! Though the Scriptures everywhere point us to Christ's coming again as our great hope, the poor, faint-hearted Christianity of our day can hardly bear to think of it. Many professed Christians would rather that Christ might never come. In the days of Christianity's pristine vigor, the anxious inquiry of disciples was: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" Then Christians wrote to each other about citizenship in heaven, whence they looked for the Saviour; and comforted one another with the assurance that the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God. Then they lifted up their heads, and looked up with joyful hope at every turn in human affairs which they could by any means construe into a probable herald of his nearing Epiphany. Then the prayer: "*Thy kingdom come*," had a depth of meaning and lively anticipation which now is well-nigh lost. Then "the appearance of Jesus Christ" had power over the soul which made men "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Then the most earnest and constant call of apostles and their followers was: "COME, LORD JESUS; COME QUICKLY. EVEN SO. AMEN." Is it so now? And does not the manifest change argue a great wane of faith? Can we regard ourselves as upon the apostolic foundation, when we no longer join with heart and soul in apostolic prayer? Conceal and dispute it as we may, it is a fact, that the faith of the Church is awfully beclouded, enfeebled, and uncertain. Judgment cometh.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. SEPTEMBER, 1865. No. 9.

Special Contributions.

THE EAGLES.

WHAT are the New Testament eagles? The inquiry respecting their nature is of importance, and deserves close attention; for they are spoken of by the Lord Jesus himself, in connection with the close of the dispensation, or *aion* (αἰων). It is when he is discoursing of his coming, that he mentions the eagles. They are referred to in two passages.

The first is Matt. 24 : 28, "Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." The other is Luke 17 : 37, "Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." In the former passage the eagles are mentioned in connection with the *parousia* (coming); in the latter the context points out that strange and sudden translation, wherein one is taken and the other left.

With regard to the common view, which makes the eagles to prey on a carcass, it may suffice to say that it cannot be sustained, inasmuch as eagles are not carrion birds. The Greek name for vulture is γυψ, gyps.*

In all probability the eagles represent saints; those believers who shall be counted worthy to escape the "great tribulation," by having part in the Enoch translation; by being caught up into the *cloud-pavilion*, when the Lord shall have arisen and come forth out of his place in heaven, to punish the inhabitants of the earth, *before* his visible revelation to the world. In other words, they are the wise virgins; identical with, or a part of, the "144,000," and with the "man-child" caught up to the throne of God. These are they who are taken, when others are left behind.

That this "taking" will have a *twofold* fulfilment is indicated by the different expressions used by our Lord with reference to the eagles, in Matt. 24 and Luke 17. In Matthew they are probably the "Philadelphian" saints —the ready ones who have kept the injunction respecting patiently waiting and looking for the coming of Jesus. And in this passage, the corrupt ecclesiastical systems esta-

* It is supposed by popular commentators that the gathering of the Roman armies against Jerusalem is indicated by the reference our Lord makes to the eagles; as though he would say, "*This* carcass is not to be destroyed by common carrion birds, but by eagles." As regards Matthew's narrative, such an explanation may be accepted as the minor and primary fulfilment of the words; but in Luke's Gospel the context totally precludes such an allusion; since the eagles are there mentioned in connection with the taking of one and leaving of another in one particular night; and history is silent respecting anything of the sort having occurred at the siege by Titus. As soon as Jerusalem was compassed by the armies of Cestius Gallus, all the Christians fled to Pella, immediately on his withdrawal; and as for those who remained, none were thus "taken," but all were involved in a common ruin, except the miserable remnant of 97,000 prisoners who were taken to Rome to follow the conqueror's triumphal car. From Luke 17, it is abundantly manifest that there is a *translation* to some place, and that this translation is sudden, and happens in a certain night, and this is entirely incompatible with the supposed identity of the eagles mentioned by our Lord, and those in the Roman standards, and puts the matter at rest as regards the chief incident—whatever allusion to the Roman eagles may be included in the narrative of Matthew.

Digitized by Google

blished by the harlot and *her daughters* are spoken of as *the ptoma* (πτωμα), the "carcass." What an awful thought that the loving Saviour should, in accordance with the exact truth, thus designate the outward church! How fearfully concise and suggestive the term! It reminds us that institutions and ordinances may be perfectly orthodox, whilst the church is corrupt; though bearing as close a resemblance in outward form to the elect bride as a corpse does to a living body. Yet, how can the two be confounded? The breath of life is wanting in the inanimate body, and the odor of corruption is perceptible.*

The eagles of the 17th of Luke, on the other hand, are, perhaps, the great body of all other

* How greatly has the coming kingdom been overlooked and hated by the modern churches, not excepting those that are evangelical! This kingdom which (in the septenary chiliads, at least), is the *grand climax of redemption*, has not only been overlooked and put into the background, but is continually denied; and even bitterly reviled, as "carnal," "visionary," unscriptural, and fabulous. "This is the heir; come, let us kill him." And remember that this kingdom, of which he so often spake, is as dear to Jesus as the apple of his eye. For, not until the kingdom comes, will he begin to make such a gathering of the travail of his soul as shall commence to satisfy him. At present, as has been the case ever since the fall, and not less since the great sacrifice on Calvary, evil vastly predominates in the world. The great modern evangelizing agencies, giving by means of the increased facilities of the press, a final and, as it were, irresistible testimony to the world, are met by equally extraordinary means and efforts on the part of the adversary, who, in his turn, works the enginery of the printed page to its utmost extent. Orthodoxy, equally with Popery, has denied the ancient and true hope of the church and of the world, and presumptuously endeavors to substitute better methods. Evangelical agencies are relied upon for the regeneration of the world; but, while they have been blessed to thousands, how impotent to effect the desired object have they proved! The world, and the growing youth, are waxing worse instead of better. Meantime the *Spirit* and the *Word* teach us to pray, "*Come*, Lord *Jesus!*" and to plead, "How long, Lord?" But what motto do we find in the official organ of one of the leading, and one of the best, societies of our churches? Just this: "An evangelical ministry, an active church, and a sanctified press, the hope of the world." If the light that is in them be darkness, how great is that darkness! We mean not an iota less of love for these heralds of the cross, and such sentiments may be, and will be, considered by some, who take all their opinions, ex cathedra, as bold; but the truth remains the same. *Tekel* is written on all human instrumentality, as far as the regeneration of the entire race is concerned; and the Lord will not give his glory to another, not even to the churches; and still less to a dead Laodicean orthodoxy, whose chief characteristic is commingling and fraternizing with the world, and in which converted souls are in so vast a minority, that it is impossible for them to give tone to it.

What Dr. Cotton Mather, the most learned minister of his day in New England, who died in 1728 —the same year in which Dr. Whitby, the *originator* of the modern theory of the world's *conversion*, died—says, is still more true now than it was then.

"Lord, who believeth our report? For, when the Lord shall come, he will find the world almost void of true and lively faith (especially of faith in his coming); and when he shall descend with his heavenly banners and angels, what else will he find, almost, but the whole church as it were a dead carcass, miserably putrified with the spirit and manners and endearments of this world?

We are now in midnight darkness, wherein the church sleeping is to be roused at each ear with that outcry, than which nothing is more seasonable, "The Bridegroom cometh!" But that clamor, "The Bridegroom cometh," repeated, even a thousand times for the waking of but one soul among ten thousand, will effect hardly anything. The cry is made hardly otherwise than as in the ears of the *dead*, after the most vehement repetitions of the same thing.

When I should wish to stir up my brethren, who are in a deep sleep, with these messages and admonitions, to shake off this soft and indeed lethargic and deadly slumber, I know that I shall appear to my friends a vain dreamer, a sort of Lot, and that they will treat me as one in jest or in sport, and as a man in the falling sickness, seized with, I know not what enthusiasm; and that sleep may hold them in still more pleasing fetters, they will make use of, as it were, *sleepy medicines*, a diversity of commentaries on certain prophecies as not yet fulfilled."

A similar testimony occurs in a sermon preached before the United Presbyterian Synod of Illinois, August 28, 1861, from the text, "Can ye not dis-

Digitized by Google

believers, not caught up in the first stage of the First Resurrection, at the time of the *parousia*,—those who were left behind, to pass through the "great tribulation." But, inasmuch as, when he is revealed, the Lord Jesus comes with *all* his saints, this second class, too, whether dead or living—these later Elijah hosts—will, at a subsequent period, necessarily have been also removed from the earth; probably a few days only before Messiah's visible appearing. They are then taken up through the aerial spaces to where the *soma* (σωμα) of Luke 17:37 is; that is, the church, which is the true body of Christ. For, at that time, as regards its bulk, it will be in the pavilion-cloud with Jesus, whilst the vials of wrath are being poured out on the earth. This use of the word "body" is not uncommon in Holy Writ. Thus, in Romans 12, it is written that there are many members, and one body (σωμα) in Christ, and in 1 Corinthians 6, that our bodies are the members of Christ. In Ephesians, it is said that there is one body, and one spirit, even as we are called in one hope of our calling.

Ordinary readers of the New Testament are not aware of the marked distinction which it everywhere makes between the "*parousia*" and the "*epiphany*" of our Lord. The reason is, because there is no difference made between them in the common English translation; both words being rendered by "coming." "*Parousia*" signifies personal presence, whether apparent or unknown. "*Epiphany*" signifies a personal appearing *manifest to all*, and generally connected with glorious effulgence.

When the iniquity of the earth is almost ripe, Jesus will come into the regions of space in the neighborhood of our earth. As it is here that Satan and his demons dwell (Eph. 6:12), a conflict ensues. Satan is cast out, and then confined to the earth, Rev. 12. This is followed by the full development of the mundane system of iniquity (hitherto "let" or restrained), culminating in the appearance of the Man of Sin, that is, Antichrist, and in the "great tribulation," which will continue for three and a half years. Those who are *expecting* Jesus (and none others *can* watch), will be delivered from these tremendous evils, by being translated into his presence; where each one will be *rewarded* exactly according to his works. Their natural bodies will be changed into spiritual bodies, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and they will be endowed with all the glorious properties that belong to and distinguish the body of Jesus himself; one of which is an inconceivably rapid power of locomotion, and freedom from the control of gravitation's laws, as exemplified in the scripture narrative of the journeys of angelic visitants (Dan. 9:21, 23), and the appearances of the Lord, after his resurrection. During all this time the Lord Jesus and his heavenly hosts will be *invisible* to the dwellers on the earth, and the world at large will know nothing of his presence. The extraordinary disappearance of the wise virgins will cause but a ripple in the current news of the day; on the other hand, however, all true disciples left behind will become wide awake, never more to slumber.

Now, when meditating upon these stupendous events, it is worthy of the most solemn attention how our Lord declares that there will be an exact parallel between this period and the time of Noah.

Noah warned the world in the plainest and most repeated manner of the all-important

---

cern the signs of the times?" Matt. 16:3, in which the speaker says:

"The last days, and therefore the days immediately preceding the advent, will be noted for great laxity of morals in the church of God. See 2 Tim. 3:1, 5. This is a sad picture, yet since the apostle tells us that the persons spoken of have a form of godliness, we must look for its original in the church of God; nor need we look long to find it in our own day. Is it not very largely true, that there is now scarcely any such thing as discipline known in the church? What enormity can the imagination paint which some one or more of the churches does not tenderly cover over with the mantle of religion? Besides, it is an age distinguished for selfishness, pride, insubordination, and formality. No part of the church can plead not guilty to these charges. Is it harsh, then, is it uncharitable, to say that the apostle describes, in the above language, the church of our own times, and that consequently we are living in the time closely trenching upon the coming of Jesus Christ?"

Digitized by Google

event that was about to transpire. Very probably he also indicated the time (at least as occasion seemed to warrant his doing so), inasmuch as it had been revealed to him by God.

And what do we find now? Is not a cry going out into all Christendom: "The Bridegroom cometh?" It is true that, owing to the minor difficulties of chronology, we do not yet know the exact time. It was written: "Ye know not when the time is." But it is just as true that we do know that the coming of the Lord is imminent—just about to take place; for it is written again: "Know that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand; ye see and know it of your own selves; know that he is nigh, even at the doors." "Ye hypocrites, can ye not discern the signs of the times?" And when once the seventieth week of Daniel shall have commenced, with the making of Antichrist's covenant, the "wise" (the *Maskilim*—those who "pay diligent attention"—) will understand the precise dates. It is not said that no man shall know of that day, but only (then) that no man knoweth. So it was also said "Of that day the Son knoweth not." But he knoweth now, else he could not, at a subsequent period, have signified it to John; and it would involve an absurdity to suppose that he will not know when he himself is about to appear. So, also, in the time of the end, the wise, the *Maskilim*, shall understand, just as Noah did.

Look again at the parallel, and remember that Jesus says, it will be exact. As it was then, so it shall be. What else then transpired? We read that *Noah was shut into the ark by God himself seven days before the flood came.* Of necessity, intercourse then ceases between him and those he had warned. But yet, up to that very day everything still held its accustomed course in nature and the world. Precisely in the same way the expecting saints will be removed, *in advance of* the fearful judgments, into the darkly embosomed pavilion-cloud mentioned in 2 Sam. 22 : 12; Ps. 18 : 11; Ps. 97 : 2, and especially in Ps. 27 : 5; Ps. 31 : 20; but above all in Is. 26 : 20, 21. Compare Micah 1 : 3. When the wise virgins shall have entered in, then, too, the door will be shut, and entrance denied.

And in this connection we are reminded how very often it is objected by the careless, and even by true disciples not yet familiar with the great things revealed concerning Messiah's approaching kingdom, that Christ's coming is not yet so near as some declare, seeing that the great signs in the heavenly bodies, foretold by our Lord, have not yet appeared. There would be force in this reasoning, were there only one coming, or only one stage in the coming, mentioned in the Scriptures. "They knew not, until the day that Noe entered in." Up to that day only the *general* warning was vouchsafed; but then the surprising procession of the beasts in pairs, and the shutting of the door on all, indicated to all but irretrievably hardened mockers the immediate propinquity of the deluge-overthrow and ruin. So, likewise, in our day, the powers of heaven will not be shaken, nor will any miraculous events take place, until the ready saints shall have been shut up in the pavilion-cloud. Only thus can the parallel hold good.

Thus the seeming contradictions in the statements of the Scriptures regarding the advent are completely reconciled. We read: "They shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds; every eye shall see him." This is at the *epiphany*, the *visible* manifestation, when he shall come, with *all* his saints. But again we read: "Behold, I come as a thief; as a snare shall it" (that day) "come." The *parousia*, viz., the visible presence of the Lord in the aerial regions, is unannounced, silent, undiscovered, taking away something, and then lost to view. It is thus the thief disappears; his visit is discovered solely by the loss incurred. So, at the *parousia*, the Lord comes, silently, invisibly, into our aerial spaces, and takes away those few believing, faithful saints who have kept "the injunction of the patient waiting," and who are "waiting for the Son of God from heaven"—the *expecting*, 144,000 redeemed away from the earth, the first fruits unto God and the Lamb, following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. Oh, exalted privilege! Greatest among blessings! Far more to be desired than rubies!

E. E. R.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

FOR WHAT SHALL WE PRAY?

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."—2 TIM. 4 : 3.

NOTHING can be more truly pitiful than to observe the nervous and childish agitation with which the "religious world" hurries here and there, to evade, explain away, or render unnecessary the Personal Presence of the Son of God. "The world is improving every day," says some popular preacher. "Missions and societies will soon convert the world," says another. "The idea of the Son of Man coming to Reign upon earth is carnal and sinful," says a third. It is most painful to observe the inveterate malice of the heart, thus concealed under the mask of spirituality, or hid under the language of piety, like a serpent under flowers. But, in spite of all this, the Lord "shall REIGN in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." (Isa. 24 : 23.)

In former times there was a certain body of men who were famous for long prayers, but, strange to say, when the Highest Authority pronounced its judgment upon these men, it was anything but a judgment of approbation. "Blessed be ye, Scribes and Pharisees, for your long prayers," said the Jewish people. "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" said the King of the Jews. These men of long prayers were afterwards the foremost in the Crucifixion of the Son of God, and were always foremost in covetousness. Far be it from us to compare the modern Protestants with the ancient Pharisees, yet, in spite of ourselves, we cannot but observe a most unfortunate resemblance. The Pharisees were notorious for "covetousness," and their desire for the "chief seats in the Synagogues;" and modern Christians are notorious for their love of money and the approbation of men. But, above all, the Pharisees were accomplices in the master crime of the world,—the Crucifixion of the Son of God. "Well!" you will say, "there the parallel fails between the Pharisee and the Protestant. We have never crucified Christ, and we abhor those who did crucify him." Do not be too hasty in repelling the accusation: though you have not crucified Christ, you have condemned him to PERPETUAL EXILE. Whatever difference exists between a sentence of death and a sentence of perpetual exile, just so much, and no more, exists between you and the ancient Pharisees. The Lord has promised to come again, and to "be King over all the Earth," and YOU have *spiritualized* and trodden underfoot that magnificent promise; and have ridiculed and treated with contempt all who ventured to revive it. The Saviour, with his own blood, has purchased a kingdom, and has promised to "restore ALL things," and you have cut down his Empire to the fragment of an idea. The Pharisees killed the Son of God, and you have built his sepulchre. The Pharisees put him to death, and you have buried him for a thousand years. The Pharisees crucified the Lord—not for the mere pleasure of killing him, but—because they hated his presence, his interference, and his government. He claimed to be their King, and they put him to death that they might escape from his dominion. This is precisely the temper of modern Christendom. It has no personal enmity to Christ; it has no direct wish to persecute or slay him; but it hates his presence, it dreads his interference; and as for his kingly government, the very thought is insupportable. "What! must we give up those smooth and comfortable sermons—those cautious preachers who never tell us of the threatening judgments, nor torment us with the Prophecies concerning the Second Advent—must we give them up for the awful presence of the 'King of kings?' We who have done so much to reform our corrupt government; who have distributed, and taken 'bribes' in voting in our men for Parliament, and can cover the 'multitude of sins' under the cloak of 'disseminating the Gospel,' increasing the funds for our col-

Digitized by Google

leges, and improving society in general—must we renounce this system of adaptation; must we break down this finely-adjusted balance, to welcome the Advent of the Lord from heaven,—to submit to the sanctity of HIS government, and the purity of his laws? No! We will have Christ to SAVE us as much as you please, for salvation is comfortable; but not to GOVERN us, for his government is uncomfortable. We will allow him at a distance to give us *spiritual* directions; but nearer home we prefer our own government, our own ministers, and the principles we have already *put* in operation. We can certainly improve, 'evangelize' and govern the world quite as well without the personal presence of the Lord."

Oh, "Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" What, if the world should be evangelized through your instrumentality, and could be brought to the same standard with that of your ministers, what an unsanctified world of bickering and strife would you have! Are not your ministers, of the different "sects," as much at variance with each other as the nations of the earth? Many of them have never been "born again," and preach not through desire of saving souls, but because it is a profitable business. Alas! instead of your ministers being the instruments in the world's conversion, the world is fast converting them to its own follies and fashions!

Our "long prayers" are, therefore, little better than those of the Scribes and Pharisees; the difference in our favor is miserably small. In spite of all we can do, the state of things, both at home and abroad, becomes every day still more alarming.

For what, then, should we pray? We see Philanthropists, Philosophers, men of "progress," running to and fro with furious haste, worrying mankind with every invention of every addled brain, to force happiness upon them; and we see all their efforts come to nothing! We see the world growing more wicked and wretched every day — ripening for its Last Apostacy! We see the ministers of the Gospel departing from the Primitive doctrines of Christianity — *spiritualizing* the Scriptures into empty dreams, and denying the future Reign of the Son of God upon earth! We see "Spiritualism" (a sign of the "Last Times," 1 Tim. 4:1), with its twenty millions of votaries, spreading far and wide the "*doctrines of Devils*," (*didaskaliais daimonion*, "teachings of Demons,") denying the inspiration of the Bible, and bidding defiance to all law. "For they are the Spirits of Demons, doing signs to go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole habitable globe, to gather them to the BATTLE OF THAT GREAT DAY of God Almighty." (Lit. trans., Rev. 16:14.) We see Christendom diseased, and, to effect its cure, trying every imaginable thing but the sole remedy—the Personal Presence and Reign of the King of Glory—the world's first, and *last*, and ONLY remedy, and yet the only remedy that is thrown aside. You hear a great lament about the sad state of affairs, but you never hear of the sovereign remedy. You may pray against the vices of the day, but you must not breathe a word as to the universal remedy. The personal reign of the Son of God is a proscribed subject, and is banished from our prayers as if it were equivalent to the "Reign of Terror." Yet, so long as the personal reign is omitted in our prayers, just so long is God dishonored. We resemble a sick man praying for health, yet refusing the only remedy for his disease. Every invention of man is joyfully adopted, but the grand scheme of Divine Wisdom is contemptuously passed by.

But from the hand of God the world's deliverance must come, as the world will soon learn by an awful experience; and that deliverance would have come 1800 years ago had the world been willing to accept it. Divine wisdom saw from the first what even a child may see now, that man cannot govern himself. Man can retrieve nothing, can restore nothing, can give life to nothing; should he even be permitted as an instrument in the world's conversion he could do no more; he could not change the brute creation, he could not change the climate, he could not restore the earth to its Eden state, nor could he bind Satan for a thousand years. Fix it as you will you cannot do without the direct interpositon and personal presence of the "second Adam,"—"the Lord FROM heaven."

It is for this manifestation we are bound to

Digitized by Google

pray, as the prescribed remedy for every disease, for every disease of the mind, of the body, of the earth, and of the sky—of Creation itself. "For the earnest expection of the CREATURE waiteth for the MANIFESTATION of the sons of God." St. Paul tells us that all creation is longing for that day. David, bolder still, speaks of the inanimate creation rejoicing before the Lord, when he cometh to judge the earth. St. John closes the volume of Holy Writ with that one solitary prayer,—"Amen! even so COME, Lord Jesus." The first words of Scripture announce the creation of light, then, for six thousand years, the light wanders over a world of ruin and desolation; and having crossed the ghastly desert, it merges in the gorgeous light of Millennial Day. Creation longs, all inanimate nature rejoices, the last line of Scripture prays for the ONE great act—the Coming of the Lord Jesus. And, wonderful to tell, this great act is despised or dreaded by the Church of God itself. Where it should be the perpetual theme it is made the perpetual scorn. No wonder that the world does not improve; no wonder that the Church has sunk so low; when the only divine remedy is rejected, and when the poisonnous remedies of *money* and man's *wisdom* are adopted in its stead. God would be eternally dishonored were the world to prosper under its present machinery; for if man's wisdom is to supersede the wisdom of God—if we only want God afar off, and can dispense with him at hand—it might almost be said that we do not want him at all. "His citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to REIGN over us."—Luke 19 : 14.

When the birth of the King of the Jews was proclaimed, "Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." And when the reign of the King of the Jews is announced, the Gospel ministers are troubled, and all Christendom with them. They utterly deny the sovereignty of Christ; they call him their king, but deny him the kingdom; they ask for God's GIFTS, but do not ask for Himself. Here lies the evil. God has told us by a thousand revelations that nothing but himself, his own personal presence, can renew the world. We deny the revelation, despise the promise, and look only for the gifts. We are troubled, like guilty Herod, at the presence of the King; and are put to shame by the wise men of the East, who, when they had seen the star, "rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Oh! to what a state has Christendom been reduced, when it dreads, like guilty Herod, what the heathen from the extremities of the earth rejoiced to see! When God has offered us his own Son to be our King, we scoff at the announcement, and desire no king but Cæsar. This fatal evil attends all our public prayers; and so long as we allow it to remain, we need expect no effectual answer. No prayer can be altogether in vain; some kind of answer will always be returned, but not the answer we require. Such prayers will be so far from saving us from the Great Tribulation, that they will be far more likely to plunge us into its awful vortex. "Pray," says Jesus, "that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." But we shut our eyes tight, and with indifference declare that we see neither signs nor danger; although passing events now warn us that the Great Tribulation is almost upon us. By our indifference we have added to the list another sign of the times; for Peter informs us that there shall come in the last days, SCOFFERS, saying, where is the promise of His coming? But in spite of those "scoffers" there are some who never cease to pray for the world's ONLY remedy; and God has promised that their prayer shall be answered. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man COMETH, shall he *find faith* on the EARTH!" God will not always be mocked by the half hypocritical prayers of Christendom; but those his enemies, which would not that he should REIGN over them, he will order to be brought and slain before him.—Luke 19 : 27.

LABOR IS WORSHIP.

LABOR is worship; toil is devotion;
Order is heaven's perpetual law;
Work is our lot, on the land or the ocean;
Man independent, the world never saw.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

SHIMEALL'S NEW BOOK.

ON THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.*

THE Creeds, Confessions of Faith, Articles of Religion, and Covenants of every branch of the Church throughout Christendom, Roman, Greek, and Protestant, recognize the doctrine of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, in resurrection power, as a scriptural, undoubted, and fundamental part of the Christian Faith. It is, therefore, a proper and legitimate subject of study and teaching, and one which involves the integrity of Christian character, and each one's individual salvation, perhaps more deeply than is generally supposed. Every effort to throw light upon this theme, then, or to draw out the real teachings of the Scriptures respecting it, is to be commended, as much as any similar effort with reference to any other article, entering into the essence of our common Christianity. And if there is one topic of fundamental truth more needing to be set forth and correctly understood than another, at this time, it is this, touching the nature, relations, and objects of the coming again of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have reached a period in the history of human affairs when things are exceedingly portentous, and in which we have nothing whatever upon which we can venture to count with any degree of certainty that that great event is not now close upon us, and at our very doors. Considering, also, the Divine predictions concerning the unbelief and apostacy which are to characterize the world and the Church with reference to this subject as the time approaches, and concerning the terrible mishaps and disappointments which shall befall men for their indifference and unwakefulness to it, it is a matter of devout gratitude that competent and earnest-minded men, full of the spirit of faith, and honest in their reverence and study of God's word, are found diligently searching out and setting in order what has been revealed for our learning, and what we may rely on in our contemplations of the mysterious and pregnant future.

We accordingly hail this book, by Mr. Shimeall, with great satisfaction, as an able and seasonable contribution to the literature of this great theme. Though too analytic, angular, and involved in style to become generally popular, it is the product of a learned and faithful explorer, and treats the various theories and aspects of the subject with comprehensiveness, judiciousness, and power. Taking the Bible as an intelligible book, which we are to interpret as we do any other serious writing meant for the enlightenment of mankind, he has reached the same conclusions which are presented in "The Last Times," and to the setting forth of which our Serial is devoted—the same conclusions to which every intelligent and honest investigator has come, or must come, who accepts the Scriptures in their plain literal import, which we claim to be the only true way of receiving them. In other words, he is a thorough *Millenarian*. The substance of his book is to the effect, that the faith and hope of the Church, in every age, have been directed to and centred in the second personal coming of Christ, as that event which is to consummate her redemption; that the present Christian dispensation is the kingdom of God *in mystery* only, and that the kingdom of God *in manifestation* is not to come till Christ comes; that we are now very near to that event; that there is no ground for the popular expectation of a millennium of universal righteousness, prosperity, and peace, as alleged to be effected by the conversion of all nations to Christ through ordinary church

* "Christ's Second Coming: Is it Pre- or Post-Millennial? The great Question of the day, Scripturally, Historically, and Philosophically considered with a Reply to Prof. Shedd on 'Eschatology,' or the Millenarianism or Chiliasm of the Ancient, Medieval, and Modern Church. Also, remarks on an Article on the same subject by Rev. E. F. Hatfield, D.D. By the Rev. Richard Cunningham Shimeall, author of 'Our Bible Chronology.' New York: John F. Trow, and Richard Brinkerhoff. 1865." Price $3.00.

Digitized by Google

instrumentalities before His second coming; that the second-coming is to be immediately preceded by much ignorance of the Scriptures, great apostacy from the faith, much formalism, hypocrisy, unbelief, blasphemy, war, revolutions, abounding iniquity, and unprecedented manifestations of the power and malice of the Devil; that Christ is to come first invisibly, to catch away to himself all his ready and waiting saints, when those that are "left" shall have to pass under the power of Antichrist and the great tribulation; that the Jews are to be restored to their own land in their unbelief, and converted only at Christ's subsequent manifestation for the destruction of Antichrist and his hosts; that Christ will then set up his millennial kingdom in the earth, and reign in it, with his saints, whilst Paradise is being restored, and all things brought back to their Edenic excellence, in which, by the administrations which mark the end of the thousand years, they are to be settled into a sinless, deathless and eternal state of peace and blessedness. In this is of course involved, what he regards as "the great question of the day," the pre-millennial coming of Christ, a twofold resurrection, and the personal reign of Christ on earth.

His method of treating the subject includes, first, an Appeal, respectfully addressed to leading Anti-millenarians, in which certain important points touching the merits of the subject, and the objectionableness of their manner of meeting it, are well put; second, An Abstract of the Testimony of the Scriptures respecting the second coming, both as to the substance of the doctrine, and its practical uses; third, An Examination of the several false theories that have been put forth upon the subject, showing their unscriptural and unsatisfactory character, and utterly refuting them. This constitutes the largest part of the book, and what the author considers the principal want of a numerous class of clergy and laity, which he has mainly labored to supply. Various leading questions involved are then discussed separately, as also the nature of the resurrection and the future attributes and official dignities of the saints; concluding with "A Complete Synopsis of the Millenarian Scheme of the Second Coming." All this comprises 320 large octavo pages. Then follows a Reply to Prof. Shedd's "Eschatology," embracing 117 pages, and setting forth the Millenarianism of the ancient, medieval, and modern church. This is a valuable part of the book, in which Prof. Shedd's "history" is completely put to shame, as it deserves to be, as respects this subject. To all this is added some 20 pages of valuable Notes, with an Index to the whole.

We thank Mr. Shimeall for this timely and able production, and heartily recommend it for its fairness, its comprehensiveness, its general soundness of exegesis, and its manly honesty, respectfulness, and just conclusions. He who values the truth upon this great theme, cannot fail to value this book. We shall rejoice in finding it extensively circulated and attentively studied. The means of a large acquaintance with the whole subject may be found in it. We transfer a few extracts which may serve to show the style of the author, and at the same time set forth some important truths.

1. It is one of the resorts of Anti-millenarians, in order to "head off" the influence of our teachings, to try to make people believe that the most learned and pious in the Church are quite at disagreement among themselves, both as to the events predicted in the Scriptures, and the time and order of their fulfilment. Upon this point Mr. Shimeall justly appeals, and says:

"Even admitting this to be so, does it justify us in the neglect to *study* God's prophetic word—that sure word of prophecy concerning which St. Peter tells us that we do well to take heed? How otherwise can we hope to reap the fruits of that Apocalyptic benediction: Blessed is he that readeth, and they which hear the words of this prophecy? How, to *fully* preach the Gospel of Christ? But we must beg to demur to this averment. True, expositors, on both sides of this great theological question of the day, *do differ* in their interpretations. We affirm, however, that, so far as Millenarians are concerned, these differences relate not so much to the detailed events of prophecy, as to the *chronology* of those events. In regard to the first—the *events* predicted, we venture to affirm that within the last half century, and particularly within the last twenty-five years, there has existed *greater harmony* of views among the learned and pious who have written on this

Digitized by Google

subject, than on any other mooted question in the entire range of the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. And as to the second—the *chronology* of prophecy, their variations on the whole predestined period of six thousand years, from the creation of all to the close of 'the times of the Gentiles,' do not exceed more than about ten years; while the more *exact* of them—and they are by far the larger number—agree to within from one to four years. The fact is, Millenarians do not pretend to infallibility as interpreters of God's word. And so, some few of them at least, either from a *partial* acquaintance with the subject, or a neglect to properly *discriminate* between things which differ, have contributed not a little to perplex the minds of inquirers. But, after all, what is the *chaff* to the *wheat?* saith the Lord. And is it not a fearful thought, IF, perchance, the very errors which originate in the infirmities of the Lord's servants, should be designed, in His all-wise providence, as *a test* of our fidelity in searching the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so, and, in case of our *neglect* to do this, to *blind the minds* of those who, on the ground of the above pretext, reject the truth?"

2. Another frequent and common resort to divert attention from our teachings is, to endeavor to persuade people that it is a matter of entire indifference, whether the second personal coming of Christ is to be *before* or *after* the Millennium; that death is in effect the same thing as Christ's coming, and that it is quite sufficient to refer to death as the great motive to faith, repentance, and a holy life. Upon this point our author again appeals, in the words following:

"Are not the best, the dearest interests of the church and people of God, dead and living, and the solemn destinies of an impenitent and ungodly world for time and for eternity *involved in*, yea, *bound up with* that momentous event, the judgment-coming of the Lord? Why, what, saith the apostle John? 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know, that *when* He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.' That is, as St. Paul declares, that *then* 'THE LORD HIMSELF shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God.' For what? Why, to '*change* the vile bodies' of them that sleep in Him that they may be made like unto His own glorious body. Nor this only. '*Then*, we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we *be ever with the Lord.*' And, on the other hand, Christ will *then* be revealed from heaven in flaming fire with his mighty angels,—for what? Why, to '*take vengeance* on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.' Now, if these and the like events *are to accompany* the second coming of Christ, how can it be said to be a matter of *indifference*, whether that event is to be *pre-* or *post-*millennial? For it is certain that IF, as we have said, that event turns out to be *pre-*millennial, then it follows, that all those splendidly glorious and awfully terrific events, instead of being remote from the present generation, are *nigh at hand*, yea, *even at our doors.* You must, therefore, pardon me, if I affirm on this point, that with me it is an article of faith that your individual salvation and mine, with all others of this day, depends upon our being *right* in this matter. It is to those only who, in faith and hope, 'look for Him,' that 'He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation.' Heb. 9:27, 28.

"The second coming of Christ, in all ages, has constituted the *faith and hope* of the Church, both on earth and in heaven. Why, reverend sirs, are you not aware,—and if not, should you not be aware,—that out of the *forty-one* prophets who have spoken to us in the Old and New Testaments, only *six* of them foretold of the FIRST coming of Christ, and that these six impliedly, that is, with greater or less distinctness, refer also to that event, while *all* the others, in almost numberless places, in every variety of form, predict in the most positive terms the SECOND coming of Christ? Again, are you not also aware—and if not, ought you not to be aware—that the *scope* of prophecy, spanning, as it does, the entire period of the predestined six thousand years, from the creation and fall to the close of the times of the Gentiles, points the eye of faith to the SECOND PERSONAL coming of Christ? And that hence, while all the Old Testament saints *died in faith* of that event as seeing it afar off, those of the New Testament, immediately upon their conversion, being pointed to it as *imminent*, '*looked* for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, even our Saviour Jesus Christ?' and that, '*loving His* appearing,' they *hastened unto* the coming and kingdom of God, prompted by the desire to depart and to be *with* Christ, which is far better.

"Does it not then become those who claim to be 'ambassadors' of the Lord Jesus Christ—the 'watchmen' placed upon the ramparts of the Church of this day,—to see to it that we 'refuse not Him that speaketh; for, if they

Digitized by Google

escaped not who refused Him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that speaketh from heaven; whose voice then shook the earth: but *now*, He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.' Surely, if that self-denying, faithful, suffering, inspired, and miracle-working Paul said, 'I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a *castaway*,' it becomes *us* to keep this his example before us, if we would escape the 'consuming fire' of God's wrath against ministerial unfaithfulness."

3. It is, perhaps, due that we should further state, what we are not prepared with confidence to indorse, that Mr. Shimeall expects the end of "the times of the Gentiles," and the commencement of the great judgment, in the course of the next few years. He may be correct. Other learned chronologists have come to the same conclusions. And all the signs would seem to point that way. Nor can we be too serious in expecting the first acts of the great consummation in any of these passing years. But we perhaps venture too much in undertaking to designate any particular year, and to say that *then*, and not till then, will the age terminate, and the Saviour come. We give Mr. Shimeall's conclusions in his own words.

"We claim to have demonstrated, not only by the *tradition* of the pre-Christian Jewish writers, and the early post-Christian fathers, but also by *Scripture*, that God has revealed to the Church the unalterable period of six thousand years as the interval *within* which, under the three dispensations, Patriarchal, Jewish and Christian, ALL his ordinary purposes of Providence and Grace were to be accomplished. The six chronological tables, historic and prophetic, which, though formed of different combinations, yet all give the *same aggregate* of six thousand years, are referred to in proof." "We see, from these tables, that while *five* of them all concur in filling up *to a year* the divinely predetermined period, the last one, the *sixth*, shows that we have reached that limit to within *four years* from the present time!

"The inevitable conclusion therefore is, that, unless these chronological deductions can be shown to be fallacious, the generation of those now living are they upon whom 'the ends of the world are come;' and that, mark, *not the end of time*, but THE TIMES OF THE GENTILES will close in A. D. 1868."

R. M. DUDLEY'S PAMPHLET.

MILLENARIANISM COMBATED.

HAVING noticed Mr. Shimeall's elaborate work, setting forth the scripturalness and genuine churchly character of our views, we now turn to notice a very different production, with a copy of which the author has favored us. Though but a small pamphlet of forty pages, and containing nothing new to us, there is something about it in which we rejoice. We are as liable to mistakes as other mortals, and we are glad to have our views honestly and fairly sifted. If we are in error, we will be specially grateful to any one for pointing out our inaccuracies, and in making the truth evident to us. It is not out of love to millenarianism as such that we have written or spoken; and with no spirit of sect or party, that we press our convictions upon the attention of our fellows. Our only interest is in the truth. It is for that we seek. It is for that alone that we can obtain the consent of our hearts to contend. We have put forth millenarian views, because we sincerely believe them to be *Bible* views, and hence the real truth of God. The hardest mental struggles through which we have ever passed, were those which, contrary to all our preconceptions and desires, resulted in the conclusions which we now hold and teach on these topics. But we are willing to let all pass for nothing, and give thanks for it besides, if any can satisfy our judgment and conscience that we have thus given ourselves to error, or to the advocacy of what is "false and dangerous." We wish all the light we can get, and have not the least resentment to indulge towards those who, with honest minds and earnest hearts, feel themselves called on to subject our ways of thinking to the most rigid scriptural tests. "Let the righteous smite us; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove us; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break our heads."

We are gratified in another respect with the appearance of serious proposals of difficulties in men's minds obstructing the reception of our doctrines. The greatest obstacles with which the truth has to contend, are *indifference*, and indisposition to give it candid attention. And when we are furnished with tangible evi-

Digitized by Google

dences that people are looking at it, debating it, grappling with it, and carrying it up to the tribunal of Scripture for settlement, we begin to feel that it is doing its work, and are hopeful as to the result. We have known very distinguished infidels to be converted to Christianity by the very studies which were meant for its confutation. And just as Christians are more sincere and conscientious than unbelievers, in that same proportion do we feel more hopeful for our doctrines when we find Christians sufficiently awake to come forth to fight them. We know how it was with Joseph Mede, with William Twisse, with Charlotte Elizabeth, with ourselves, and with many others. There is, of course, great responsibility incurred by venturing to influence the beliefs of men contrary to the truth, or without knowing exactly where we stand, and what basis we have for our doctrines; but better is the very Euroclydon, which nearly overwhelmed St. Paul, than all the calm and quiet of the Dead Sea, with its poisonous waters and infected shores, and the spirit of Sodom at its bottom. We have no quarrel with people for honestly, and with all their might, combating our views; but this dumb, sneering *silence*, without knowing anything about the subject, or troubling to make up one intelligent thought concerning it, we denounce, and we must brand as inexcusably shameful, in such as lay claim to be Christians, especially Christian ministers. If men cannot go with us, let them at least examine the subject, and settle themselves on some clear basis with which they are willing to confront the coming judgment of Almighty God, and write and preach against us, if duly enlightened conscience so constrains them; but let them not treat things so solemn, vital and momentous, as "A wild ass used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure."

Mr. Dudley does not go into the subject at large. He confines his argument to the resurrection, the twofold character of which he thinks we have not sufficiently made out, and so considers that he has disposed of the whole question of "Pre-millennialism." In this alone he shows that he has not yet penetrated quite deep enough to appreciate the real merits of what he has undertaken to combat. It is true, if we can establish the doctrine of the twofold resurrection, that we thereby necessitate the belief in the pre-millennial advent; for there is to be no resurrection until Christ comes. But this is not a leading argument upon which the doctrine of the pre-millennial coming rests. We claim to be able to establish it on quite other and independent grounds. And if the pre-millennial coming is once established, a twofold resurrection, as to time, necessarily follows; for there is a resurrection when Christ comes, and there is another at the end of the Millennium. And one great reason, perhaps, why the twofold character of the resurrection is not more largely and specifically treated in the Scriptures is, that it is so plainly and unmistakably involved in what they teach concerning the time and relations of the more central and controlling subject of the Saviour's return. We do indeed believe, and feel entirely convinced, that the distinction, in *time* as well as *nature*, between the resurrection of the saints and that of the wicked, is taught in both Testaments, with a clearness and directness sufficient to entitle it to our reception, apart from all other than simple grammatical considerations; but if our reading of these particular passages could even be so weakened as to render that reading doubtful, we still have an ample reserve to settle the doubt, in what relates to the main question whether Christ is to come *before* or *after* the Millennium. Mr. Dudley has, therefore, really not touched the quick of our argument, even in the single point on which he has taken it in hand to deal with it. He does not pretend that what he has adduced necessarily *precludes* the doctrine of a twofold resurrection. All that his pamphlet claims is, that the passages quoted do not establish the doctrine. If we, therefore, can prove, by other scriptural arguments, that there must of necessity be a twofold resurrection, all his mere negative reasoning must pass for nothing, and he must try again, if he would at all reach the real strength of our position. He certainly cannot expect us to surrender upon such a showing, or to persuade honest inquirers after the truth that he has vanquished our forces, by

Digitized by Google

a demonstration which at most only touches one of our outposts, and has not yet even discovered the nature or extent of the fortifications in which our cause is intrenched.

But he has not even taken the outpost which he has assailed. There is not a text upon which he comments which a just estimate of his work can regard as wrested from us. His adventures in Greek, his criticisms, and his quotations of authorities, we will not characterize according to their merits, lest it should be set down to a wrong motive. Let it suffice to say, that we were quite familiar with everything of importance which he has reproduced, when we wrote the book upon which he animadverts. We were able, then, to dispose of it in ways entirely satisfactory to ourselves, and to many others. We are, therefore, not at all taken by surprise, nor the least disturbed in our conclusions by this re-array of oftbroken lines. We know their strength, and are satisfied that it is weakness. We will refer to a few instances.

In 1 Cor. 15 : 22–24, we have this passage: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward, they that are Christ's, at his coming; then the last (εἶτα τὸ τέλος), when he shall have delivered up the kingdom," &c. We briefly indicated the exegetical force of these words in "The Last Times." Mr. Dudley objects to our interpretation.

1. He charges us with "taking undue liberty with the inspired word," and with "changing the arrangement of the received text," in that we "make εἶτα το τελος the close of the preceding sentence, rather than the beginning of the one in which it now stands." If Mr. Dudley takes the punctuation marks of the New Testament, and its division into chapters and verses, as *inspired*, he goes much further than we feel authorized to go, and has found out something which has not hitherto been known. We are not satisfied to take as God's "inspired word," that which is the work of monks and printers, no better able to judge in such matters than Mr. Dudley himself. If any one can give a solid reason for a different punctuation from that usually found in our Bibles, we know of nothing why he should not make the alteration, and read accordingly. And to raise an outcry against any one for so doing, as if he were thereby perverting or corrupting the Scriptures of truth, is to take things down to a level in which discussion is folly. We stopped our quotation with εἶτα το τελος, because it was enough to indicate our view of the passage, not because it was essential to our interpretation, or thought to be the end of the sentence. The reading which we give above is that which we had in mind, and which we are prepared to defend, as couched in the very terms, members and drift of the original text, and hence *the inspired reading*, as distinguished from that which *men* have imposed.

2. He charges that we "*force* the original," in making εἶτα το τελος refer to *the last* in the ταγμα, or order of succession which Paul here ascribes to the resurrection. A little penetration to distinguish an announcement of an exegetical result from a grammatical criticism, would have given his words a more charitable tone, and helped his readers better to perceive the truth. What we find in this text, and claim as its meaning, is simply this: that there shall be a resurrection of *all the dead*, both good and bad; for so it is said: "As in (or by) Adam ALL (παντες) die, even so in (or by) Christ shall ALL be made alive;"—that there is a ταγμα, an *order of succession*, a disposition into companies or bands as of different troops, in which this resurrection is to occur;—that this "order" refers principally, if not exclusively, to a difference of place as *to time*, which the several detachments occupy in their forthcoming, as manifest in the words ἀπαρχη = *first-fruits*, επειτα = *afterwards*, εἶτα = *then*, or next in succession;—that there are three classes to whom this resurrection extends, to wit, Christ, they that are Christ's, and they that are *not* Christ's; for these are embraced in the specified "*all*" that die by Adam;—that this ταγμα, or arrangement into different bands, embraces εκαστος, EVERY ONE, and hence ALL WHO DIE, as it could not be a ταγμα in any proper sense without reaching to the whole army or congregation which is declared to be thus disposed or

Digitized by Google

arranged in "order;"—and that all this necessitates the reading of the passage as we have given it, namely: ταγμα *first*—"Christ, the first fruits;" ταγμα *second*—"they that are Christ's, at his coming;" ταγμα *third*—"το τελος, *the last, the complement*, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." If this "forces the original," it is by the force of its own terms and implications, and a force which our post-millennial expositors strive in vain to vanquish.

3. But Mr. Dudley tells his readers that "τελος is not an adjective qualifying ταγμα understood: but a noun in the nominative case." Be it so; we say nothing to the contrary. Χριστος, in the first count of the ταγμα, is in the same case; and so is οἱ, in the second count. To what verbs "understood" will he refer these? If he knows how to parse εκαστος, at the beginning of the sentence, he will know that no verbs understood are required, and that το τελος is to be disposed of under precisely the same rules as Χριστος and οἱ. Whence, then, the necessity for inventing a verb understood? All is clear, grammatical, intelligible without Mr. Dudley's "*estin*," or the "*cometh*" of King James's version. And if our friends are so scrupulous about "altering the arrangement of the text," and "taking undue liberty with the inspired word," let them abandon this human interpolation of verbs and periods where they do not belong, and read this passage in its luminous, accurate and complete form as the hand of Paul left it, and their unworthy charges against our statement of its meaning fall to the ground, and a difference as to time in the resurrection of the three bands in the great host of the dead is invincibly established. Even Professor Stuart, than whom we have had no abler Greek scholar, and no more bitter opponent to Millenarianism, concedes, that "the απαρχη . . . επειτα . . . ειτα of 1 Cor. 15, by which the apostle marks the respective ταγμα or order of each, and represents that which is at the end (τελος) as different from the rest," admits of no other "satisfactory exegesis," than that which assumes the resurrection of the righteous to be entirely separated from that of the wicked, and that this passage "agrees entirely with the view in Rev. 20 : 5." Comm. on Apoc. 2, p. 176.

As to the phrases in which the Scriptures refer to the resurrection, we find in them satisfactory data for the proper decision of this question. Sometimes they speak of it as αναστασις νεκρων, *resurrection of dead ones* (Acts 17 : 32; Rom. 1 : 4; 1 Cor. 15 : 12, 21; Heb. 6 : 2), or as ἡ αναστασις των νεκρων, *the resurrection of the dead ones* (Matt. 22 : 31; 1 Cor. 15 : 42). This phraseology applies to the resurrection in general, or to either the first or second resurrection; for every resurrection is a resurrection of some dead one. But there is another style of expression employed upon this subject. We read of αναστασις εκ των νεκρων, *resurrection out of*, or *from among dead ones* (1 Pet. 1 : 3); and of ἡ αναστασις ἡ εκ νεκρων, *the resurrection, that one out of*, or *from among dead ones* (Luke 20 : 35; Acts 4 : 2); and of ἡ εξαναστασις των νεκρων, THE OUT-FROM-AMONG-RESURRECTION (Phil. 3 : 11). This second class of phrases, compounded with εκ or εξ, we hold to denote, *never* the resurrection in general, but *always* some particular and *eclectic* resurrection; that is, a resurrection in which some are raised, and others are left unraised. And no Greek scholar, for the first time examining the New Testament with his mind unfettered by prepossessions, would think of taking them in any other sense. Even Mr. Dudley agrees, that we here "meet with something wearing the face of an argument for the millennial resurrection." Nor has he been able to mar that "face," or to show that it is not a true face for that which wears it; as will be easily seen from the way in which he meets it.

1. He translates των νεκρων, "*the state of death.*"* He says this "gives greater ease and force to the original." But we prefer to abide by the original *as it is*. Our only business with it is to translate it rightly, which he has failed to do in this instance. If των νεκρων means the state of death, it is impossible to use it without the preposition, απο or εκ. It sounds well

* The scriptural word for the state of death, is ἁδης, rather than των νεκρων. Luke 16 : 23; Acts 2 : 31.

Digitized by Google

enough to read, "resurrection *from* or *out of* the state of death;" but when compelled to read "*resurrection of the state of the dead*," the thing becomes absurd. Yet there are very many places in which the sacred writers speak of αναστασις των νεκρων without using the preposition, all of which are either stript of their sense, or made to contradict the writer's meaning, by adopting the interpretation of Mr. Dudley. Besides, νεκρων is *plural*. *State of death* is not plural, and therefore is not enough; it must be *states* of death, or state of *deaths*, or *states of deaths*, either of which is next thing to nonsense. And even where εκ is used, we have only to insert "*state of death*" for the words for which they are proposed as the equivalent, in order to be satisfied that some terrible emasculation has been perpetrated. Take that masterly passage of St. Paul (Phil. 3:8–11), in which he recounts his anxieties, sacrifices and willing sufferings, being made conformable to the very crucifixion of his Lord, that, *if, by any means, he might attain unto* THE RESURRECTION FROM THE STATE OF DEATH. Poor Paul, that he should put himself to all this living death to secure a resurrection from the state of death, which he must needs have attained at any rate! And how unfortunate his composition, to start this massive climax, and let it explode for him just at the very crowning point! Resurrection from *the state of death*, the goal of apostolic aspirations, prayers, labors, tears and martyrdom! Why, the veriest worldling of a Christian might count on as much.

But νεκρος does not mean *state of death*. No lexicon so defines it. Robinson gives its meaning—"*one dead, a dead person;*" in the plural, "emphatic, *the dead, those dead;*" that is, DEAD ONES. A resurrection of dead ones may be particular or general; but a resurrection (εκ) *out of, from, from among* dead ones, cannot be general. The εκ in such relations is partitive, and necessitates discrimination and election. Its force is to limit the αναστασις. There can be no raising of dead ones *out of, from*, or *from among*, dead ones, and yet no dead ones be left.

2. But Mr. Dudley says there is nothing in the "native force of εκ" upon which to argue thus; that we must first prove its meaning by its connections in any given passage. As much as to say, we must prove εκ to be εκ apart from εκ itself! In matters of language, use is law; and, whether the force of εκ be "native" or *acquired*, Greek writers, lexicons, critics, and the Greek Testament, everywhere and continually, assign to it the office of expressing *out of, from, from among*, and invariably use it before a genitive signifying a *whole* from which *a part* is taken.* This is enough for our purpose. And if more is needed, our author's own special rule for the translation of εκ will furnish it: "Whenever the connection expresses the idea of taking away, separating, or selecting one or more persons or things from a number, εκ is to be translated *from among*." Phil. 3:11, in its whole drift, expresses these conditions. The αναστασις (if not καταντησω) with which εκ is joined, and the των νεκρων of which it is partitive, bring it fully under this rule. The testimony of this text therefore must stand, evidencing that there is to be a resurrection OUT FROM AMONG the dead ones, to which self-sacrificing saints alone shall attain.

But there is a class of passages in which there is a still more conclusive form of expression on this subject, which Mr. Dudley has not touched. If αναστασις εκ των νεκρων can, by any possibility, be made to apply to the general resurrection, ἡ αναστασις ἡ εκ νεκρων (which is the reading in Luke 20:35, and Acts 4:2), certainly cannot. Ἡ αναστασις ἡ literally means, "*the resurrection, that one.*" This necessarily implies some other one besides this one. And if we translate the remaining words εκ των νεκρων, with Mr. Dudley, "*from the state of death*," we get the absurd result, that there is some other resurrection than that one "from the state of death." These passages therefore serve the double purpose to show, *first*, that εκ των νεκρων does not mean "from the state of death;" and, *second*, that

* For example, εκ παντων—"chief *from among* all;" εκ παντων αθηναιων—"*from among* all the Athenians;" εκ του λαου (Acts 3:23)—"*from among* the people;" εκ του οχλου (Acts 19:33)—"*out of* the multitude;" εξ ὑμων αυτων (1 Cor. 5:13)—"*from among* yourselves;" εξ ανθρωπων (Heb. 5:1)—"*from among* men;" and so εκ των νεκρων—"FROM AMONG THE DEAD ONES."

Digitized by Google

the resurrection "out from among the dead ones" is to be distinguished from some other resurrection. And if we ask what that distinction is, the only legitimate answer is, *that which inheres in the force of* εκ; that is, the difference between the resurrection in which some are left behind, and that in which none are left.

We merely note these additional observations. 1. It cannot be shown that εκ or απο νεκρων is ever used in the New Testament, except of a resurrection in which some are left behind. 2. The resurrection of Christ was one in which the great company of the dead were left; and in all the many passages which refer to that event, it is always said to be εκ νεκρων—"*from among the dead*," except in two passages in which the εκ is omitted only for the sake of euphony, and hence must be taken as understood. 3. There is not an instance in the New Testament in which it can be shown that εκ των νεκρων refers to the general resurrection, or that simply αναστασις νεκρων is ever used where the resurrection of the righteous exclusively is meant.

From all this the conclusion is forced upon us, that Mr. Dudley is mistaken in his animadversions, and that the doctrine of a twofold resurrection is a true doctrine of Holy Scripture. Nay, he himself agrees that there is to be a resurrection "peculiar to the righteous," and wholly different from "the common resurrection." (P. 19.) Only, that one should take place before the other, is what he cannot see. The preposition εκ settles the fact of succession. 1 Cor. 15 : 22–24 settles the question of an *order* in the resurrection, and disposes the risers into three bands, cohorts, or companies; between the first and second of which more than a thousand years intervene, and the interval between the second and third of which is designated by almost the same word, and one exactly equivalent in meaning to that which designates the interval between the first and second. We are therefore prepared for the intervention of *a long period* between the resurrection of them that are Christ's, and of them that are not Christ's. How long that period will be, we find distinctly stated in Rev. 20 : 5, 6; where we have depictured a "first resurrection," the partakers in which live and reign with Christ "*a thousand years;*" but οι λοιποι των νεκρων—*the remainder of the dead ones*—LIVE NOT AGAIN UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS ARE FINISHED."

We have not space to notice Mr. Dudley's attempt to invalidate the testimony of this text. It is in substance that of the ancient Anti-millenarians, whose great endeavor was to throw discredit upon the book in which it is found. Mr. Dudley says it is "the most difficult, intricate, and enigmatical of all the books of the Bible;" that the passage in question "is but the language of vivid conception and imagination," and belongs to a department of Scripture, "on the one hand often so obscure as to be susceptible of no definite interpretation, while on the other it is often so general and comprehensive, that it may have a seeming fulfilment in events to which it has not the slightest reference." He therefore thinks it folly to base a tenet upon it.* We leave him to settle such rationalism with Paul, who used to say, "ALL SCRIPTURE IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (2 Tim. 3:16.) We do not wonder, indeed, that the Revelation is a sealed book to those who hold the theories of Anti-millenarianism. It certainly never can be taken at John's inspired estimate of it, and be made to fit the doctrines of Mr. Dudley. By this alone we may know that his "tenets" are wide of the truth, as respects these questions. Nay, we detect, in his pamphlet generally, a rationalistic temper, which must be laid aside if he would learn to interpret God's word aright. For instance, he thinks it conclusive against the future multiplication of the race, in a dispensation where death is absent, that there will not be space enough in the world after a while to sustain them! Will he tell us how it would have been, if Adam had never sinned? But, if any one wishes to find objections to our tenets, he can find them, as to inspiration itself, and to all the vital doctrines of inspiration. The knowledge of the truth requires a hearing ear and a willing heart, otherwise everything will be parable, mystery, foolishness.

* "Hence the folly of basing a tenet upon unfulfilled prophecy has grown to be an axiom in theology." Where, then, does he get the doctrine of Christ's second coming, of the resurrection, of eternal life? These are all topics of "unfulfilled prophecy."

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. OCTOBER, 1865. No. 10.

Special Contributions.

THE EAGLES.

(Continued.)

THE great *parousia* is near, very near. The eagles are about to be taken up, because the times are fulfilled, and the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Living, as we do, under the sixth (yearday) vial, the next event is: "Behold I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth." All the general indications are fulfilled, and the various prophetic periods, though not precisely definable, are nearly run out. Their foreshadowing, minor fulfilment in years, is just about to be succeeded by the far more tremendous and solemn anti-typical fulfilment in literal days. The whole world is ripe for the approaching changes; human iniquity is fast culminating, and the long suffering of God about to expire in the predicted fearful judgments. Of all the signs the most unmistakable is the political state of the Jewish people, in such strange and startling contrast with their oppressed condition during seventeen centuries of unceasing calamities.

How solemn the thought that the removal of the eagles will probably happen in the present generation, and may, even now, take place at any moment! What a privilege to be living in such a time, and what a weight of responsibility too!

But the world and the great body of the Church "know not." Noah has not yet entered into the ark, and in the present time of prosperity the warning he gives falls unheeded. Even if in itself true, the great event cannot, it is argued, take place *now*. But it is worthy of particular notice that the existence of profound peace, and of a hitherto unequalled prosperity, both in this country and in Europe, would be no counter-indication of the nearness of the parousia, but ought rather to lead prophetic students to expect it. For is it not written: "When they shall say 'peace and safety,' then sudden destruction cometh upon them?" And how much more the gracious deliverance and removal of those who are watching for the "day-star" to arise, amid the gloom of still prevailing night? Do we not read: "As a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth?" Observe the parallel in Noah's case. Everything held its accustomed course. Society worked smoothly. Business was in full whirl—"Until the *day* that Noah entered into the ark." They "knew not!" How full of meaning are these words! What utter unconsciousness! What entire absence in the daily round of anything indicating an overwhelming, and, above all, a miraculous catastrophe! "*They knew not.*"

Midnight is the hour. As yet unbroken silence reigns. But at the midnight hour the sublime transmutation and translation steal upon the astonished Church—burst in upon the unready virgins. The warning all have heard.

> **But now the world is sleeping**
> **In slumber most profound;**
> **But few the watch are keeping,**
> **Though fast to judgment bound.**

Oh what an awaking will then be in the Church, and how clear an apprehension of millenarian truth, of the solemn predictions of

Digitized by Google

judgments, and of the glorious promises of the hastening reign! It is safe to say that at that time a very clear line will soon be drawn in the churches between mere outward profession and a living experience; and that, in a very short time, the advent will be the constant theme of the pulpit, and the coming of Jesus the ardent hope of *all* believers as the sole possible deliverance from the thickening clouds of terrific persecution and tremendous judgments. With what a new light will the sacred Scriptures shine, so that even the simple shall understand! How wearily will the remaining hours drag! And those who, like Thomas, at first still remain incredulous, or linger, like Lot's wife, not having faith nor insight enough, even yet, to sacrifice all earthly prospects, and flee to the appointed place of refuge in the "wilderness," will be left, like those unbelieving Egyptians of old, to encounter, unprotected, the furious buffetings of the storm of hail and fire, mingled with blood.

Only one grand issue will then be made between the disciples of Jesus and the followers of Antichrist, viz., whether Jesus, as the Anointed King, will be just about to appear visibly in the heavens, with great power and glory. At that time nothing else will be spoken of in the Church. And as for the ungodly, so infatuated will they be that, when gathered together for the great Idumean battle, it will even then be true of them that *they* "knew not."

The holy Scriptures contain within themselves the key to their own interpretation. "The Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." "Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?" "Evil men understand not judgment, but they that seek the Lord understand *all things*." "Whoso keepeth the commandment shall know no evil thing; and a wise man's heart discerneth both *time* and judgment." "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you (unexpectedly) as a thief." Is the time of the parousia an exception?

A recent writer has well said: We need not be in darkness as to that day if we will only watch. "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Rev. 3:3. "And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through." Mark 12:39. Is not this good evidence that the time may, yea, that it will, be known to the watching, waiting, believing ones? "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." Luke 17:26. It was so with Noah in regard to the flood; the definite time was revealed to him. "And the Lord said, 'My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.'" Gen. 6:3. But, as the time was about expiring, God made a further revelation of the time to him. And, having found him faithful, and obedient to the instructions already given to him, "The Lord said unto Noah, 'Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous (faith is counted for righteousness) before me in this generation. For yet seven days and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.'" Gen. 7:1, 4.

And is not the event for which we are looking of as much consequence to the world now as was the flood to the antediluvians? Is it not vastly more so? Are not the events to transpire at the second coming of our Lord in glory and majesty of infinitely more importance? And shall those who, like Noah, believe God's word, and "do according to all that the Lord commanded him," be left in darkness, for that day to overtake them as a thief? No, surely not. "If, therefore, thou shalt not watch, I will come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Certainly this implies that if we do watch, as it is our duty to do, in obedience to the commands of Jesus, we shall know the time, even as Noah did. When the second flood shall overwhelm the second apostacy, all indeed will not be destroyed, but all must pass

Digitized by Google

through the Great Tribulation, except those who are in the ark, who shall have the words addressed to them, "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast; for, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isaiah 26 : 20, 21. Noah, in reality, did not pass through the flood; he was not in it, he was above it. The ungodly world lay below him in the deep, while he looked down in safety on the tumultuous waters. Noah is the type of the *elect*, who shall be "counted worthy to escape all those things that are coming upon the earth, and to stand before the Son of Man (Luke 21 : 36), and who shall be saved from the day of the Lord."

Seven days elapsed between the entering of Noah and the commencement of the flood; or, at least, the exact period of the flood became known on the seventh day previously, and the moving of the great train began. "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man." Let thoughtful minds ponder this, and also weigh the meaning of the two "wave-loaves." The wise virgins will certainly be removed before "the great tribulation." Will it be *immediately* before? May it not rather be synchronous with the commencement of Daniel's seventieth week of seven years; simultaneous with the making of the covenant with the Jews? At least will not this event fix the precise dates of the Saviour's visible appearing for judgment? and will not the preparations for the moving of the train at the parousia—to be completed by the removal of the 144,000, perhaps a year or two later—then commence? Our Lord suffered at the Passover, may not the eagles be removed on "the morrow after the Sabbath at Pentecost, being the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb?"

We already see strange things—such as the girdling of the earth with the telegraph, and the completion of the Suez Canal—long ridiculed as visionary. We shall see stranger. We lately heard of a proposed convention of Jews at Paris, under the patronage of the Rothschilds, to arrange matters for the colonization of the Holy Land. Is this mere rumor, or is, indeed, the "set time" of a truth arrived? Ps. 102 : 13. Daniel understood by books. Let those who, like Mary, and the men of the Baptist's time, are "pondering and musing in their hearts" whether "Napoleon," or "another," is he that, in another sense, shall come, imitate Daniel, in confession and supplication; and who can tell but the Lord will be entreated, and will "send forth" to give them also, "skill and understanding." The time had come. The Jewish musers were right. The man had come, too; but John was not he. Yet very soon John *pointed him out* amid the crowd on the banks of Jordan. And there were *some* Nathaniels, who believed and were promised the sight of "greater things." Amen! Even so! Come, Lord Jesus!

The eagles and the wise virgins both symbolize the same class, viz., the favored, watching, Thessalonian, Philadelphian, saints. And, in concluding this article, we would ask, is there not an allusion to them in Isaiah 40 : 30, 31, and also in Psalms 103 : 5? May it not be that, in the "coming ages," the faith of the eagle saints will be held up as a pattern and an encouragement? In the "Prophetic Times," vol. iii, No. 5, Dr. Newton has ably presented the view that the redeemed earth may be relieved of its surplus population by the translation, from time to time, to the countless other worlds of the creation, of those who shall have attained to a sufficiently advanced stage. The natural body will be exchanged for the spiritual body, and the youth will be renewed, in immortal bloom, as the eagles' was; and these holy beings, too, like the eagles, will mount up into the vast cerulean, where worlds unborn shall sing God's glory, and the people that shall be born shall hear "the Lord's righteousness" from the elect seed. Then the people that shall be created shall praise the Lord. The Church (Eph. 2 : 7), and especially the Bride, shall make known to the sons of men the Lord's mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Psalm 22; Ib. 102; Ib. 145.

Let the reader, then, solemnly ponder what

Digitized by Google

the Lord has said respecting the gathering of the eagles. And may he be numbered with the faithful few, who, moved with fear, like Noah, are preparing an entrance into the ark of safety, the pavilion-cloud provided for the season of the coming flood of wrath! For,

The few that still are heeding
The awful judgment call,
And, while they wait, are pleading,
Like Lot, at Sodom's fall,
They seem, like Lot, but mocking,
To all the worldly throng.
Reproach and curses shocking,
They now have suffered long.

And, moreover,

The Christian steward, slothful,
Puts off the evil day;
Disturbed in scenes unlawful,
He says, "It must delay."
But still, though by his smiting,
The faithful sigh in pain,
While he the truth is spiting,
The Master comes again.

E. E. R.

June 10, 1865.

OUR HOPE.

Dear Sir: I am a student of prophecy of thirty years' standing. The views I have been led to take are substantially the same as those advocated by "The Prophetic Times." I am truly glad to see your monthly issue, and trust it may have a wide and increasing circulation until the Lord comes, bringing the kingdom and glory with him.

The apathy or indifference which is generally displayed by professing Christians towards the true "hope of the Gospel," or towards the doctrine of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in the clouds of heaven to judge the world in righteousness, is, in my opinion, a fearful sign of the times, as we cannot but look upon such indifference as a proof of prevailing infidelity or worldliness. The means of grace and the ordinances of religion appear to be looked at as the *end* or *object* for which a profession is made, as if there were no future glory either for the Church itself or for every individual member. Even with regard to many whom we cannot but look upon as true Christians, the indifference or opposition which they manifest towards the glorious doctrine of the premillenial advent, and personal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ over this earth, which he has redeemed with his own blood, is a sad and painful evidence of a wide-spread declension and apostacy. Surely all the true seed, the spiritual Israel, should be looking for and hastening to the coming of the day of God, and the manifestation of his kingdom upon this sin-cursed and groaning earth of ours. One might suppose that the reign of Satan, of sin and death, with all their dreadful consequences, had endured long enough, and that the hearts of all saints were so sick and weary of it all that a perpetual agonizing cry were continually ascending to the throne of God, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

But, so far from this being the case, both the pulpit and the religious press (with a few noble exceptions) actually sneer and scoff at the Advent doctrine and at those who maintain it. If this be not blasphemy, it is very nearly allied to it, and all Christendom will soon be given up to judgment, as its bitter and inevitable consequence. Babylon and Antichrist will soon throw off the mask, and will be consumed or fall together. At this crisis it seems most desirable that some effort should be made to unite all the Advent saints together as the heart of one man, in view of the near approach "of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him."

The world has now well-nigh run its disastrous course, and we may begin to lift up our heads, knowing that our redemption draweth nigh. All Churches (both national and voluntary) seem to have rejected the "Blessed Hope" of the Prophets and Apostles, and of the primitive Church universal, and are turned aside unto fables, or unto the hope of the hypocrite and of the fool.

There is, therefore, the more occasion that those whom the Spirit of God has aroused up from sleep should sound the trumpet in the hearing of those who are sleeping and slumbering.

Judgment is coming, and the Judge standeth

Digitized by Google

before the door, and yet we hear the cry of "peace and safety," education, improvement, enlightenment, progress, discovery, science, and the like.

But there will be a terrible awakening very soon, when the day of grace has passed away and the door of mercy shall shut with iron clang, and that forever.

Great have been the privileges of Christendom. An open Bible, a preached Gospel, a crucified Saviour, a great atonement, religious ordinances, and means of grace, and what is the result of it all? Popery, infidelity, formalism, or rationalism.

No Church holds the Apostolic faith and hope together; or, by virtue of the blood of the cross, is waiting and looking for the glory that is to be revealed.

This is a dark and dreary retrospect, and it presents to us a dark and terrible future. For, although it is true that Christ will be revealed to those who are waiting for him, it is also true that Antichrist will be revealed to those who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Trusting, however, that overcoming power and persevering grace may be given to all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in truth and sincerity,

I am, dear sir,
Yours faithfully, B. B.

ON THE STUDY OF PROPHECY.

Good, conscientious Christians, often shrink from the study of prophecy. From its difficulty and obscurity they argue that it was not the Divine purpose that it should be understood.

But can this be so? Our Lord blamed the Jews for not knowing the prophecies that related to his first advent, and for not recognizing him by them; and furthermore, old Simeon was rewarded for his expectation, which was derived from a knowledge of these prophecies. But if difficulty and obscurity argue the Divine purpose that the mysteries of the prophetic Word should not be looked into, then Simeon was wrong and the Pharisees were right. And these first advent prophecies are a hundred-fold more difficult than those which relate to the second coming. Let us look at them even from one stand-point, with all our knowledge of them as fulfilled prophecies, and they are perplexing. So scattered are they, so few by comparison, and so mixed up with those of the second advent, that it is no wonder the Jew could not see them, or that, when he did, he was ready to ask, "Of whom speaketh the prophet, of himself or of some other man?" That it could be of the Messiah, of whom so many glorious things were spoken, would never enter his thoughts.

Then, again, these prophecies were so contradictory in themselves. He is to be born in Bethlehem of Judea, yet is to be called a Galilean. He is to be a Prince and Saviour, and yet is to be despised and rejected. He is to be the everlasting of days, and yet to be born of a virgin. He is to be the Holy One of God, and yet to be numbered with the transgressors. To the pre-advent student how were these difficulties to be reconciled? They amounted to contradictions, and he might justly have reasoned, if such reasoning could ever be justified, that it was the Divine purpose that these prophecies should not be understood, therefore they were not to be studied. But grant his premises true, his conclusion does not necessarily follow. We may not always understand the full drift of a prophecy; yet this will not excuse us for ignorance with its language, and for a want of understanding and reception of its *literal* and *natural* sense; *e. g.*, one prophecy declares that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem of Judea, another says he was to be "called a Galilean;" and yet again another declares, "I will call my Son out of Egypt." The pre-advent student may not have been able to reconcile these statements; but this would not justify his ignorance of the prophecies, or preclude his holding them in their literal and natural sense, waiting the fulfilment to solve their seeming contradictions.

It was the want of this inquiring, waiting, and trusting mind, on the part of the Jewish teachers, that caused their rejection of the Messiah. They knew that he was to be born in Bethlehem; but, because he was called a Galilean, they saw conclusive evidence against

Digitized by Google

his claims and rejected him. John 7 : 52. Greater familiarity with the language of prophecy, the receiving of it in its literal and natural sense, and a patient waiting for the fulfilment, would have saved them from their mistake and punishment.

And this is what we ask of Christians now. 1st, That they should be students of prophecy that relates to the second coming of the Lord. It is a part of the "Old Scriptures" that is given by inspiration of God, and that is profitable for doctrine, &c. It is most "sure," and we therefore do well "to give heed" to it. It is, furthermore, all sunshine, compared with those prophecies that relate to the first advent. Its difficulties are for the proud, the self-righteous, the indolent. The Simeons and Annas of the Church shall not be suffered to remain in ignorance; they shall be taught by the Holy Ghost.

In the next place, the language of these prophecies must be received in its literal and natural sense; and for its difficulties and seeming contradictions, we must patiently await the solution that the events themselves will bring. In doing this we will be acting in accordance with the Lord's injunction; we shall be among the watchers, and shall be found ready for the midnight cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh!" L.

MY BELOVED IS MINE.

BY REV. ROBERT PAUL.

"My Beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies. Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn my Beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether."—SONG 2 : 16, 17.

O HOW delightful 'tis to know
That Israel's God is truly mine;
From whom eternal riches flow
In boundless plenitude divine!

Thou art my own Beloved One now,
The bond is made forever sure;
Thy blood hath sealed that solemn vow
Through endless ages to endure!

From this sublimest union springs
Eternal fruits of grace below:
Man now his grateful homage brings,
While love abounds and graces grow!

In these my Loved One takes delight,
Such fragrance from these lilies rise;
Souls cleansed from sin, made pure and white,
Are precious in my Saviour's eyes!

"I am thy God," his language is,
"Thy Husband, Saviour, and thy Friend;"
And I rejoice, since "I am his,"
And know his love shall never end!

Until that glorious day appear,
When shadows all shall flee away;
O may I feel my Saviour near,
To keep me in "the narrow way!"

And O Beloved, haste the time
When day shall break, and darkness flee;
When in thy kingdom thou shalt reign,
And I thee face to face shall see!

"How long, how long," thy martyrs cry,
Until the avenging sword descend;
We, too, upon thy Truth rely,
And pray and calmly wait the end!

"IN HEBREW, GREEK, AND LATIN."

SOME time ago, a thought occurred to me in reference to the counting of Napoleon's name in the same languages in which the superscription on the cross of Christ was written. I should perhaps have waited until able to state on what Scripture ground my view was based. I thought at the time that, if really true, God would certainly reveal it to some one else, and had no intention of ever alluding to it again. I believe now, however, as the Lord has given me strength, it is my duty to do so. Permit me, then, to say, that in the light which beams from the cross of Jesus, I think I can see clearly the meaning of Revelation 13 : 18: "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man, and his number is six hundred threescore and six."

I know not what the general belief is in regard to the wisdom spoken of in this verse. Whether it is considered to be a special display of God's wisdom in so guarding this part of the testimony respecting the great Antichrist, that there should be no doubt of his identity; or whether it means that a greater degree of wisdom is necessary on the part of the student to

Digitized by Google

enable him to understand this, than other parts of the Apocalypse? It is evident no other portion is so circumscribed. It is well to notice, too, that the expression, "here is the mind which hath wisdom," is used while speaking of "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." What mind hath wisdom—not imparted, but wisdom in itself—but His in "whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Wisdom and spiritual understanding I believe to be necessary to the right appreciation of any part of God's Word, especially the Apocalypse, but the manner and connection in which the word is used in these passages, lead me to the conclusion that a new display of God's wisdom is here manifested in restricting the counting of the "number of the beast," to those who understand certain languages in which "*his name*" is numerically contained.* And surely, when we consider "him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power, and signs, and lying wonders," and how terrible the consequence will be to those who worship him, the wisdom of such guarded testimony is apparent. The name Louis Napoleon Bonaparte has been counted in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and found to contain the required number. That fact, considered in connection with other well-known characteristics, seems to point him out as indeed the "Beast," the "Man of Sin," the "Antichrist."

The fact that his name and title can be counted in English, and perhaps other languages, does not militate against this view, but rather shows the love of our heavenly Father in allowing any of his children—after the prescribed testimony has gone forth—to test for themselves, and thereby furnish additional weight to the evidence. By substituting *The Antichrist* for "French Emperor," we have the same result, and a more Scriptural title.

Two Evangelists—one of them the beloved John himself—have recorded that the superscription on the cross was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Had the Holy Spirit no design in this? Of what practical use has such information been to the Church? To me it has served as a guide to the above interpretation, and to identify the great opponent of him who hung there.

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." F. F.

* Rather the wisdom on prophetic subjects in general, spoken of in Daniel 12 : 4, 10.—Ed.

THINGS TO BE TREASURED.

1. That Christ has promised and engaged to return again to the earth.

2. That the first manifestation of his presence will be to his ready and waiting people, to take them out of the world and away from the sufferings which are then to come upon the nations.

3. That there are no prophecies now remaining to be fulfilled previous to Christ's coming for his ready and waiting saints.

4. That it is Christ's specific and oft-repeated command to his people to *watch*; that is, to be awake, ready, and expecting him.

5. That those who are not found watching when Christ comes, shall not escape the sufferings then to come upon the earth, but, as a punishment for their unreadiness, shall be left to pass through the great tribulation.

WATCH!

Watch! 'tis our Lord's command,
Unto his waiting bride;
A stranger in a desert land,
And foes on every side.

Watch! thou hast reached the days
Of peril, long foretold;
Now heavenward fix thy steadfast gaze,
King Jesus to behold.

Watch! signs are flitting past,
That speak his coming near;
The hours of night are fleeing fast,
Soon, soon he will appear.

Watch! lo, the morning breaks!
Wipe all thy tears away:
Put on thy bridal robes, and deck
Thee for the festal day.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

EXPECTING THE SAVIOUR,

AN ESSENTIAL FEATURE IN TRUE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

(From "The Blessed Hope," by Dr. M'Caul.)*

We now proceed to consider, particularly, what this "waiting" is, as expressed in the text by the words "looking for that blessed hope;" and to show, from the nature of the duty, that the practice of waiting for the second advent is an essential feature in the character of a true Christian. The glorious coming of the Lord is represented in Scripture as the promised return of a kind Master to his faithful servants. To wait for that which is promised is an exercise of faith. It is likened to the sudden coming of a thief, against which we have been warned: to take heed to the warnings of God is an effect of holy fear. It is compared to the return of the beloved Bridegroom: that the bride should wait with earnest desires for his return, is an evidence of love. It is set forth as the return of the Lord to his disciples, for which he commandeth them to watch. To wait for it, then, is an act of obedience; but in whichever of these four points of view we consider the practice of waiting for the second advent, whether as an exercise of faith, an effect of holy fear, an evidence of love, or an act of obedience, it is equally an essential feature in the character of a true Christian. Faith is an essential feature of a true Christian, for "without faith it is impossible to please God." The promises of God are the object of faith: the promise of the Lord's return is one of those most frequently repeated. Where then is faith in this promise, if the practice of waiting for it is wanting? Remember, brethren, that faith is an operative principle, and, whatever be its object, it produces certain effects. When faith fixes upon the promise of forgiveness of sins, it drives to prayer and confession. When it lays hold upon the promise of the Holy Spirit for sanctification, it produces earnest supplication that will not be silenced until the promise is fulfilled. When it looks to the often repeated promise of the Lord's return, it generates a habit of waiting for it with patience. The servants who believe that their Lord will return according to his promise, gird their loins, put on the best apparel, and hold all things in readiness; and though the shades of evening should set in, they despair not; and though the darkness of midnight should begin to pass, they slumber not; but keep their lights burning, and hearken in watchful silence to every distant sound that may perhaps give notice of their Lord's approach. And, if they speak, if the silence of expectation be broken, it is to rouse the slumbering, or to ask, "Watchman, what of the night?" or to discourse about the happy meeting: for their Lord has promised to return, and they believe his promise. Faith in the promise necessarily produces these effects. When, then, the effects follow not, where is the faith? And where there is no practice of waiting, what evidence is there of faith in the Lord's promise? Some may perhaps say, that it is not yet time to expect the Lord's advent; it would therefore be folly to wait for it; when it is near, it will be time enough to look for it. If there be in this congregation any in this faithless state of mind, let me remind them that this is exactly the excuse of the unprofitable servant whose portion is appointed with the unbelievers: mark these words, "with the unbelievers." He says, "My Lord delayeth his coming." It is not so near—no need of watching yet! You will perhaps answer, We are watching for death, for death will certainly arrest us before the Lord come again. I ask in reply, Where has the Lord commanded you to watch for death, instead of watching for his second coming? Tell me the chapter and the verse. I ask you, in the second place, what reason you have for

* This entire tract, embracing thirty-two pages, has just been reprinted, and may be had by addressing "*Prophetic Times*." Price, 10 cents. By the hundred, $6.

Digitized by Google

thinking that death will surprise you sooner than the second advent? who revealed to *you* the day and hour of which no man knoweth? You will reply, No man hath revealed it to me: my belief that death will precede the second advent is founded on no declaration of Scripture; my own reason tells me of it. So many generations have already passed away without the Lord's coming, that it is now most probable that the present will pass away in like manner. If this be your mode of arguing, then beyond all doubt you believe more firmly in the probable conclusions of your own reason, than in the words of your Lord and Master. Where then is your faith? And where is your likeness to those disciples of whom our Lord says, "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching?" But, whatever you may think of your state, you cannot possibly deny, that steadfastly to trust in Christ's promise, confidently to expect its fulfilment, and humbly to obey his commands, is an indispensable evidence of the reality of that faith, without which no man has a right to esteem himself as one of Christ's true disciples.

This practice of waiting is also compared to the state of a householder, who expects his house to be attacked, but knows not the hour when the thief may come. He therefore remains in a state of suspense and fear, and consequently of active vigilance. He knows that his property, and perhaps his life, are at stake; he therefore takes heed that his heart be not overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, or with the cares of this life, and so the thief come unawares. This represents the habit of holy fear in which the true Christian lives: contemplating the awful transactions of the great day of Christ's appearing, and remembering that it will come as a snare upon all them that dwell upon the earth; such a state of mind as the Apostle describes, when he says, "We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad: knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." (2 Cor. v. 10, 11.) Need I stop, my brethren, to prove that this is an essential feature in the character of a true Christian? No: your consciences assure you that no man is a true Christian without it.

The coming of the Lord is likened also to the return of the Bridegroom long delayed but surely promised. And the Bridegroom is chief among ten thousand. To him the bride owes life and liberty. He delivered her from death, and ransomed her from captivity. For he left his Father's house, forsook his Father's throne, and took upon himself the form of a servant, endured countless hardships, and suffered countless wrongs. And the bride is not insensible to his love, nor indifferent to the promise of his coming. The days of his absence are days of mourning. "She seeketh him whom her soul loveth: she seeketh, and findeth him not." (Song iii, 1.) She counteth the days "until the winter be past, and the rain over and gone; *until the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs*" (Song ii, 11–13); for that is the promised sign of his approach. She crieth, "Make haste, my beloved." "The Spirit and the bride say, Come." And were it otherwise, were the bride happy and content without the bridegroom, careless and indifferent to his coming, where were her love? And when persons calling themselves Christians are perfectly satisfied with the present state of things, and utterly indifferent to the Lord's return, where is their love? Does that man really love the Lord Jesus Christ who almost never meditates upon his union with him; who never prays for his coming; who never looks at the signs of the times to see whether it be near? I speak not now of those who have never fled for refuge to the Saviour, and who have therefore no experience of his forgiving love (for them to pray for the Saviour's return would be presumption): but of those who profess to have found forgiveness of sins, and justification by faith. Have you no desire to behold him who purchased for you these blessings with his precious blood? To see him as he is, and be like him; to fall down before his throne, with a heart overflowing with gratitude; and to join in the glorious song of the redeemed, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." But, whatever be your state, acknowledge that to wait in humble and earnest

Digitized by Google

expectation for the Lord's return, as the bride waits for the bridegroom, is an evidence of love; and that love is an essential feature in the character of a true Christian.

Lastly, to wait for the Lord's coming is an act of obedience: and without obedience to talk of faith, hope, love, or any other Christian grace, is nothing short of madness.

"Ye are my friends," saith our Lord, "if ye do *whatsoever* I command you." If, therefore, the Lord had but once given a command to watch for his second advent, it would have been sufficient to bind us to obedience: but I know of no command more frequently repeated in the New Testament than this. I have already, in this discourse, remarked how often it is insisted on, and how variously it is applied; I will now only notice how often it occurs as a command. It occurs as an express and positive command at least eight times in the Gospels,* five times in the Epistles,† and twice in the Revelation of St. John;‡ altogether fifteen times. It is a command given in the most solemn manner, with a blessing attached to those who obey it,§ and a curse pronounced upon them who disobey it.‖ It is a command accompanied by a declaration that is applicable to all, so that no one can hold himself excepted. "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." It is a command so clearly expressed, and so exactly limited by the context, that it cannot be interpreted figuratively, nor wrested to apply to anything but the coming of the Lord in glory. For in the Gospels it is preceded by an account of the judgment; and in the Epistles, connected with the resurrection of the dead, or the conflagration of the world. What then is the state of a man who deliberately disobeys such a command as this? If obedience be at all times necessary, is it not in such a case indispensable? Will any man dare, under any pretext whatsoever, to dispense himself or others from such a command as this? Or can any man so grossly deceive himself as to imagine that he is a true Christian, when he is living in wilful disobedience to his Lord's plainly revealed will? There is but one infallible mark of a true Christian,—obedience to his Lord's commands; and he that waiteth not for the Lord's coming, hath it not. He may possess great knowledge of the mysteries of the Gospel, but he is "a child of disobedience." You see, then, brethren, that whether we look at the express testimonies of Scripture, or consider the nature of waiting for the second advent, as it is set forth in Scripture, as an exercise of faith, a state of holy fear, an effect of love, or an act of obedience, my assertion is true: the practice of waiting for the second advent of the Lord is an essential feature in the character of a true Christian.

* Matt. 24 : 42, 44; 15 : 13; Mark 13 : 33, 35, 37; Luke 12 : 35–40; 21 : 36.

† 1 Thess. v. 1–6; Titus 2 : 12, 13; James v. 7, 8; 1 Pet. 4 : 7; 2 Pet. 3 : 14.

‡ Rev. 3 : 3; 16 : 15.

§ "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching."

‖ "They shall be cut asunder, and have their portion appointed with the unbelievers."

WALKING WORTHY OF THE LORD.

BY A. P. J.

This was Paul's prayer for the Church. For this, he says, we "do not cease to pray,—that ye might walk *worthy* of the Lord."

Can any one object to this inspired prayer of a holy apostle, whom all admit to be a bright and a shining example, and who bids us to follow him as he followed Christ? And in this very thing he follows the Saviour, who commands us to watch and *pray always*, that we may be counted worthy to escape all the tribulations which must precede His coming. Luke 21 : 36.

As reasonable and as scriptural as these injunctions appear, yet there is a class of persons who, through a self-assumed and spurious humility, exclaim, mockingly—"What! *we* walk worthily?" Notwithstanding, Paul prayed incessantly that they might walk worthily; and the Saviour expressly commanded them to "pray always, that they might be counted worthy." They call the Church Babylon, and other hard names, and stigmatize Christianity by calling it churchianity, and yet believe them-

Digitized by Google

selves humble. To persecute the scriptural standard of worth, and take an humble pride (if there is such a thing as proud humility) in professing an unworthiness which they do not believe, and would be very much offended if any one else believed, is an unaccountable delusion. O did they but spend this time in humble prayer and supplication for these graces, which they either declare to be unattainable, or pretend to have by imputation,

"Their cheerful song would often be,
Hear what the Lord hath done for me."

Then that freedom from bondage of every kind would be theirs, which they never can have while they deny the grace of imparted holiness, and pretend to have imputed holiness, which they cannot have separate from imparted holiness. Holiness must be real—it is not a fiction—not a shadow; but a reality—a genuine indwelling grace. Then it is possible to "walk worthy of the Lord;" and also to possess those other clusters of Christian graces for which Paul prays with so much fervor.

Let us examine further this prayer of Paul. He first prays that we "might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing;" and then for fruitfulness "in every good work;" not in some, but in every good work. He then prays for "increasing knowledge of God." O did we but pray for as large an increase in the *experimental knowledge* of God as we have for the asking, we would be more engaged in praising his abounding grace than in arguing away the necessity of it, or in denying the possibility of its attainment. Many will admit the possibility of an increase in intellectual knowledge, but cannot bear the mention of an increase in experimental knowledge. Thus they keep their own souls in bondage, and draw all who hear them into the same state of self-slavery.

But there is something else for which Paul prays, that seems to be the culmination of these primary virtues referred to in the first part of his prayer. It is more than a virtue, or many virtues united;—it is a state. "I do not cease to pray that ye may be *strengthened into all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness*." This is, indeed, a state of grace unto which all Christian virtues tend, and which is their principal aim, to the end that believers may glorify their Father as their divine Master did, by the exercise of "all patience." This is another term that some object to, under a pretence that they are too humble to glorify Him. This mock humility is one of Satan's most fearful devices to "deceive the hearts of the simple by fair speeches."

It sounds so like humility, it is difficult to detect its Satanic origin. Nor can any detect it, but the experimental Christian whose self-depreciation is real; based upon a knowledge of his own heart from his conflicts with sin, and the conquest of grace over sin and death, and every evil word and work. This genuine self-loathing is very different from that feigned self-depreciation, that we may go on to sin, upon the pretence of inability to overcome it. It is noticeable that after every considerable revival that monster has always reared its hydra head, spoiling young converts "with vain philosophy,"—theorizing about religion when it ought to be practising it. (Coloss. 2:8.) It is the snare of the believer, as infidelity is the snare of the unbeliever. Dr. Seiss, in his most excellent work on "The Parable of the Virgins," calls it "Satan's Opiate;" and this is its most appropriate name, and one that will stick. Let us, with true humility and devout earnestness, unite in Paul's prayer, that we may walk *worthy of the Lord*, unto *all pleasing*, being fruitful in every good word and work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience, and long-suffering with joyfulness. (Coloss. 1:9–11.) And let us, also, with praise for His abounding grace, join with Paul in testifying that "God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye always, having all-sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work." (2 Cor. 9:8.) It would seem that nothing could exceed the fulness of promise in this text. "All grace," and that "always." And "all-sufficiency," not in some, but "in all things." Count how many times ALL is used in this text, and say if anything could be more full? And yet there is one that does seem to surpass it: "He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think, according to

Digitized by Google

his power that worketh in us." (Ephes. 3 : 29.) Just think how many great and good things we can ask; and yet it is above all that we can ask; and not only above what we can ask, but above all that we can think—above the highest reach of the most exalted imagination. Say, then, is he not able to give us grace to "walk worthy of the Lord?" Believe not, then, any Antinomian depreciation of the very grace they profess to honor, nor be deceived by their spurious humility, but take the motto of the sainted Carey, "Ask and expect great things of God;" and let your work be commensurate with your prayers, as was his—and see if your half-dying souls will not receive a new life, and you be enabled to live out the apostolic prayer and injunction, in "walking worthy of the Lord."

Editorial.

THE WISE VIRGINS—WHO ARE THEY?

A LETTER, WITH REMARKS UPON IT.

BRETHREN IN THE LORD: It is in real sympathy with the design of your periodical, and with truest desire that it may be used of the Lord as one of His instruments to awaken a sleeping Church, and to bring many out of a poor world that totters on the brink of judgment, that I send you these few remarks upon the interpretation of an important passage of Scripture (Matthew 25 : 1-13), which, in connection with some other passages, has been thought to teach a *double* translation of the living among the Church of God, at the coming of the Lord, and that many among true saints of that (perhaps the *present*) time will be left on earth among the nations of the world, to pass through the judgments, because of unreadiness, "saved," indeed, at last, by infinite grace, yet, because of unwatchfulness, "so as through the fire."

My own conviction is—having once held with this very doctrine—that such a view is not only contrary to Scripture, but in many important ways injurious to those who hold it. On the other hand, most certainly I do not hold with the view (maintained by many) that all the saints *of the present period* will pass through this time of trial. I believe *none* will. That men will be brought to God during the judgments, both from among Jews and Gentiles, I surely find abundantly in Scripture, and to these I believe such texts refer as Matt. 25 : 34; Rev. 7 : 4, 14; among many others. But I can see no reason to conclude that any of the Lord's own upon earth, at the time of His coming, will be excepted from that blessed portion of those (in Christ) "who are alive and remain" till then, viz., to "be caught up together with (the risen ones) to meet the Lord in the air, and to be ever with the Lord."

If you do not agree with me, at least it may serve to the fuller bringing out of the truth upon the subject, if you will kindly admit my remarks, which shall be as brief as possible, to a place in the "Times," together with any comments of your own which you may judge needful. Truth has nothing to fear from the fullest investigation.

And, first, let me draw attention to the immediate antecedents to the parable. (Ch. 24 : 48-51.) In that, is it not certain that people are looked at in the light of *mere profession?*

"That evil servant" whose portion is given with the *hypocrites*, "where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth,"—is he anything more than professedly a "servant," judged, therefore, the more solemnly by the position he has assumed? Will a child of God be "cut asunder" (διχοτομησει), and given his portion with a class to which, however grievously he may have failed and backslidden, *he does not belong?*

But if this cannot be, as every one will surely own, then we get (what is of the utmost importance for the understanding of what follows) a *principle of interpretation.* We are prepared for "virgins" by profession as much as "servants" by profession, and both surely there are by multitudes, to whom it is taught how little the most solemn *professions* will avail in that day of solemn *reality.*

And the "*then*" links this parable of the virgins with what has gone before. It teaches us to expect the same line of thought here; which a term used brings out, however, more clearly: "then shall *the kingdom of heaven.*" Now I venture to assert, while unable of course to go into all the proof here, that wherever "the kingdom of heaven" is spoken of in relation to its *subjects*, it invariably embraces the wide field of *profession.* Granted that the mere professors are to be *cast out* of it, yet they must be *in* it in order to that. Look at the parables of Matthew 13. The wayside hearers, the stony ground, the thorny ground, the tares, the tree, the leaven, the bad fish, are all declarative of this. The parables of the treasure and pearl are the only exceptions, and these because they disclose God's *purposes* fulfilling under all this appearance of failure, first with regard to the *earthly* people, and then to the *heavenly*, the Church of God.

Look, again, at ch. 22 : 1-10, a passage which, in many ways, is a parallel one to the one we are considering. Here the same element is found. "Good and bad" are mingled together, and the doom of the one that had not on the wedding garment—what is that?—corresponds exactly to that of the evil servant: "Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

I conclude, then, that we have the same broad field of profession here.

As to the terms "wise and foolish," I grant that nothing can be positively argued from them. Yet they look the same way. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God:" and the continual

Digitized by Google

use of the words, "foolish," "fool," "foolishness," in this sense, need not be insisted on. *It is the usual style of Scripture.*

Again, as to the "oil," which all rightly conceive to be the Holy Spirit, the word is express,—"They took *no* oil with them." I dare not, in the face of this, assert that they took *some, but not enough.* Our own conclusions are, I am sure, very unsafe to trust to in spiritual things. I could not say, it was dark, and they must have had a light. Why, *must?* Are there none now who fancy they have oil and light, and have none? A lamp without oil is doubtless a foolish thing; but why does it so ill assort with the character of those expressly declared to *be* foolish? And is not spiritual folly, of all folly the most extreme? Alas, what a woful awakening when that "midnight cry" is raised! How solemn that confession, "Our lamps are going out!" But what could it more fittingly represent than the expiring of their own hopes, fed of dreaming fancies, now giving way to the terrible conviction of a coming judgment and a soul unsaved!

I can find no warrant in God's word for the supposition that the child of God may one day find that faith in a Saviour's precious blood is not a sufficient title to stand before Him when He comes. Nor have I any idea that any indwelt by the Spirit of God will ever be found crying to his fellows, "Give me of your oil." I can understand "*foolish* virgins" doing it. And I can understand how they may, with "one Vainhope for their ferryman" across the rising waters of another deluge, be found afterwards crying, "Lord, Lord, open to us!" Much less can I conceive that gracious Master looking into the faces of his true followers only to say, "I know you not." In all love and earnestness I ask of any who hold this, what Scripture teaches it?

But "it is as Bridegroom that He says so," people say. And it is, indeed, written, that "they that were *ready* went with Him to the marriage." But this answer is to me as sad as anything that precedes it. What, then, do I get my title to being numbered among the Heavenly Bride by my own earnestness, my watchfulness, my higher sanctification? Is not, then, after all, the whole Church of God the Bride? Does not Paul teach so in Ephes. 6? Or, may I belong to "the Church which is His body"—Himself—and yet not be near enough to Him to be of His Bride? Is it not written, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the *Church*, and gave Himself for it, that He might *present it to Himself* a glorious Church"—as God presented Eve to Adam? And then are we not to say, "We ARE members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones?" Is that, too, left to be decided when Christ comes?

I do, in all brotherly love and earnest sympathy with the great purpose for which you are united together, pray you, dear brethren, to give this a place in your paper, for the truth's sake. I leave many things unconsidered, perhaps, if the Lord will, for another time; only for brevity, and that this passage may have, in the outset, due consideration. Another time, if your courtesy permit, I would take up these. In conclusion, I would affectionately urge the apostle's language:

"The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain,"—is not that those *alive* in Christ, and *all* of them?—"shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS."

REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

We regret the change of views to which our correspondent refers. As we learn the Scriptures, he has just so far diverged from the truth. We regard it as distinctly taught by the Holy Ghost, that there will be people saved who are not a part of Christ's Bride, albeit they belong to his household, and to the general congregation of the redeemed. See the 45th Psalm, especially verses 13, 14. The writer there is profoundly aroused with the great themes of our faith and hope. His heart *boileth up* with the good matter—the things touching the ever-glorious King. The second verse disposes of that King's character and attainments in His first advent, and then follows what relates to the glory and triumphs of His second;—first, as respects His overthrow of His enemies, and then as respects His graciousness to His saints. To the one He comes with His sword upon His side, riding in majesty, and sending forth His arrows, which none can withstand; to the other, all His garments are perfumed with joys from the ivory palaces, whilst the Queen takes her place at His right hand, shining in the gold of Ophir. She is the King's daughter; she is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold; she is brought unto the King in raiment of needlework. But the account does not stop there. There is another class described. They, too, are brought unto the King. "With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought; they shall enter into the King's palace." "Virgins," too, they are; but carefully distinguished from those who constitute the Bride. They are only "*her companions*"—"*her fellows;*" or, as the German has it, "*her playmates.*" In the time of her virginity and waiting, they kept company with her; but they go not in with her to the marriage. They "*follow her.*" They pursue her path, but only after she is gone. Such is the force of both the Hebrew and the Greek terms in which the distinction between the two is drawn. The Septuagint says of these "virgins her companions," that they "shall be

Digitized by Google

brought to the King, ὀπίσω αὐτῆς, *after her*;" as Christ came *after* John the Baptist, and as "the citizens" in the parable sent *after* the nobleman subsequent to his departure. (Mark 1:7; John 1:15, 27, 30; Luke 19:14.)

What shall we make of this? Is it not a complete parallel to Matt. 25:1-13? Does it not serve to settle the scripturalness of our interpretation of that parable, if not to fix it as its true and proper meaning? In both passages we have a company of virgins; in that company two distinct classes; both classes finally saved; both the intimate companions of each other up to the time of the Bridegroom's coming; but distinguished from each other in the excellence of their equipments; and hence in the time of their coming into the palace, and in the relations which they sustain there.

So in Solomon's Song (chap. 6), which, as the caption tells, describeth the excellencies of the Church, we find "threescore queens and fourscore concubines," all virgins once, but then all married to the King. But there is still another class, *unmarried*, and who continue unmarried, even "*virgins without number*," answering exactly to the "great multitude" of Rev. 7, who only reach heaven through "the great tribulation," from which many, by superior devotion and watchfulness, escape, by being "taken" to "where the body is."

In Rev. 12, we read of "the woman's seed," primarily Christ, and hence the whole body of the redeemed; and in v. 5, the part of that "seed" meant for official preferment is "caught up unto God, and to his throne." Here, then, is one ascension, first of Christ, then of such as share his throne—his Bride—his Queen. But in verse 17 we read of a "remnant"—λοιπος,—*a remaining portion*, of this same "seed," which must certainly denote Christian people, not by profession merely, but in deed and in truth; for they "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ;" who are still upon earth, suffering the dragon's wrath. And as all the true "seed" must be glorified, there must be a second translation to embrace this "remnant." They suffer persecutions from which their first-born brethren are saved,—saved by that earlier translation, having been accounted worthy to escape these things and to stand before the Son of man. For want of proper watchfulness and preparation they are "left," and hence *come after*, and take an humbler place.

Rev. 4 and 5 show us a company of ransomed ones in heaven, *before* the judgment scenes of the great tribulation set in. They are persons redeemed by the blood of Christ, from every people, kindred, tongue, and nation. They may not be the only ones who belong to the bridal company; but they certainly are the most prominent of that body. They are not unresurrected and unglorified saints, for they are already crowned. But Matt. 24:29-31 tells of a gathering of an elect "*after* the tribulation;" and Rev. 7, in harmony with the same, discloses a great multitude who have been sufferers *in* that tribulation, and only reach heaven *through it*. Here, then, are two classes again, and these two made to reach heaven *at two periods* separated by the great tribulation. All this not only agrees with our interpretation of the parable of the ten virgins, but sheds upon it so much light, and surrounds it with such direct and ample supports, that we are willing here to rest the whole matter. But, a word as to the parable itself.

The basis upon which our correspondent's objection principally turns, relates to what he calls the "principle of interpretation" derived from the context. He takes the Saviour to be treating of the Church upon "the broad field of profession," and that we are thus prepared for "*virgins by profession*." But virginity is not a thing of profession. And if it were, the profession in this case is *the lamp*, or the going forth with the lamp, not the virginity of the one who carries it. Making the virginity the profession, renders the taking of the lamps meaningless, and complicates imagery, otherwise clear and beautiful. It also makes the foolishness of the improvident virgins consist in going with virgins without being virgins; whereas the parable exhibits no deficiency in their virginity, but in not providing for themselves an adequate supply of *oil*. Now, if lack of oil means despoiled virginity, then our correspondent is right; but if virginity means one thing, and

Digitized by Google

the lamp another, and the oil another, he certainly is wrong; for his "principle of interpretation" confounds them all together.

It is also to be noted that the virginity predicated of these virgins passes unreproached under the eye of Christ, as well that of the five foolish as of the five wise. The difference does not touch that one common possession. And everywhere in the Scriptures, without exception, virginity predicated of Christians always denotes true ones. Nothing is *virgin* which is not genuine, true, pure, real, whether the word be spoken literally or tropically. And a virginity which passes the omniscient approval of Christ, dare by no means be set down as hypocrisy and false pretence. If so, our correspondent's "principle of interpretation" misses its aim, and the Christian character of the unwise ones in this parable remains undamaged by it.

But "they took no oil with them." This he thinks conclusive that they were quite graceless. He dares not, in the face of this, assert that they took *some*, but not enough. He, however, fails to note the fact, which underlies as well as floats on the surface of the whole parable, of a *twofold* oil-bearing capacity on the part of these virgins: first, *the lamps;* and, second, *the "vessels with"* or additional to the lamps. As to *the lamps*, whatever reverent dread of contradicting Christ may keep back our correspondent from asserting it, there is to us conclusive evidence in the parable that *the whole ten of them had oil*, and that it is only with reference to *the vessels* that the above declaration of our Saviour applies. That the foolish virgins "took no oil with them" *in separate vessels* Christ affirms, and makes this their great and only distinction. But that they did have oil *in their lamps*, is as distinctly affirmed.

1. "They took their lamps," which must be supposed to have been dressed and arranged for what would be deemed the ordinary necessities of the case. Otherwise the foolishness of these unwise virgins becomes so bald and gross as not at all to fit the spirit and character of the parable, which deals, in its lowest possible sense, with the most refined and plausible of spurious Christians.

2. They "went forth to meet the Bridegroom," which, according to common custom, required lit and burning lamps. And if there was no oil whatever in their lamps, the fact must have been made manifest at a much earlier period.

3. When they awoke at the midnight cry, they spoke of their lamps as about to go out; *σβεννυνται, going out;* which is to say, that they *had been lit*, and were even then *still burning*, however feebly for lack of replenishment. And if lit and burning at all, *there had been oil there*, as one of the essentials of the flame only now coming toward extinction.

In other words, to say that the foolish virgins were from the commencement wholly without oil in *their lamps*, is to say that they acted a part too insane for folly, and proposed to join in a common ceremony as none ever thought of uniting in it, and said of their lamps what, in that case, could in no way have been true. This we are not prepared to say, and hence conclude that they had oil in their lamps, which burnt out by midnight; and that their final confusion and failure resulted from their improvidence, in that they "*οὐ κἐλαβον μεθ' ἑαυτων ἐλαιον;*" *took not along with them oil;* that is, as their wise companions had done, *in vessels along with*, or, *besides* their lamps.

In all calmness and candor, then, with no theories to support any more than our brother has, and with equal interest in the truth with him, we give it as our belief, that the Saviour meant to represent these unwise virgins as having oil, and hence as being real subjects of grace, but as having been too improvident in not furnishing themselves with an adequate supply after the manner of their wiser companions. The only difference that we can see between the two classes respects the "*vessels besides the lamps*," with which the one class provided themselves, and the others not. All were true virgins; all had lamps; all went forth animated by the same faith and hope; all slumbered alike; all had their lamps lit and burning for a time; all were alike awakened by the cry, which they all alike understood; all fell to trimming their, by that time, dim and dull lamps; and the foolishness of the five con-

Digitized by Google

sisted simply and only in not having sufficiently reckoned and provided for the full necessities of the case; attempting to remedy which, at that late moment, disabled them for a place at the marriage, and in that inner and privileged circle of the redeemed known as the Bride the Lamb's wife.

And we will further say, that it seems to palsy and emasculate the searching and awakening point and power of this parable to interpret it only of the coarse distinction between saints and hypocrites. It was one of the last, and, with that which follows it, penetrates the deepest, of all Christ's parables. It does not leave a man, because he is sincere and earnest in his profession, securely to persuade himself that eternity's sublimest honors are for him. It was meant to teach us that we must give ourselves to the work of a sanctification, and pray and seek for a fulness of unction from the Holy One, which transcends far the ordinary average with which people are willing to remain content, if we would ever reach our Saviour's bosom, and share in his royal prerogatives. As to insincere and half Christians, they are here out of the question. This parable has no place at all for them. They are "without hope." It will take an honest and complete filling out of our profession to find place equal to that of the unwise virgins; and if we would be accounted worthy to be among those who enter in to the marriage of the Lamb and become his Bride, or even her attendants at that marriage, we must take vessels besides our lamps, and they well filled, and attain to a "higher life," so to speak, and a deeper unction, than is commonly thought sufficient to save.

And if this stringent binding of Christians to superior attainments in grace and holiness, in order to reach the high privileges of the "Church of the first born," is "in many important ways *injurious* to those who hold it," we confess our inability to discover or appreciate them.

NAPOLEON III AND THE JEWS.

Dr. Zimple has recently published a pamphlet in London (G. Stevenson, 54 Paternoster Row,) in which he states that the Emperor Napoleon pledged his imperial word, three years ago, to the Israelitish Alliance in Paris to *restore the Jews* at the proper time for so doing. This would seem to indicate imperial meditations in directions exceedingly important in respect to prophecy, and our system of interpretation. If Napoleon should enter into covenant to return and protect the Jews in the restoration of their worship, it will prove that he is the wilful King of Daniel, the Antichrist, and the seventieth week of the famous period then commences. From that time to the great overthrow and judgment by the personal revelation of Christ, there will be but seven years.

There are also some striking facts with respect to his pretensions to the Messiahship. In his recent volume on the life of Cæsar, he represents the subject of his book (a picture of what he seems to claim for his uncle and himself), as of *Divine lineage*, as uniting in his family derivation, "to *the sacred character of Kings*, who are the most powerful among men, *the venerated holiness of the gods*, who hold Kings themselves under their subjection." Again, speaking of Cæsar, Charlemagne and *Napoleon*, he says: "When Providence raises up such men, it is to trace out to peoples the path they ought to follow; to stamp with the seal of their genius a new era; and to accomplish in a few years the labor of many centuries. *Happy the peoples who comprehend and follow them! Woe to those who misunderstand and combat them!* They do as the Jews did, they crucify their Messiah." What is this but making *Napoleon* a Messiah, on a par with Christ?

So, also, M. A. Rogeard, in his strictures on the imperial author, and for which he is now in banishment from France, charges the Emperor with setting up claims to something *Divine*. His words are: "When a man is guilty enough to make himself King, *and fool enough to make himself* God, I think he cannot have all the qualities requisite for writing history." See "The Strictures of Labienus," p. 16.

Napoleon has also recently proclaimed himself "*Emperor of the Arabs*, as well as Emperor of the French." The Jews come next.

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. NOVEMBER, 1865. No. 11.

Special Contributions.

THE OLD ERROR REPEATED.

THOUGHTS FOR CHRISTIANS TO CONSIDER.

"CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL." So wrote the inspired Paul. And another apostle says, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It is, therefore, a matter of the utmost practical moment to have *right views of Christ*, and his relations to the children of men.

The two great central facts in the Biblical account of Christ are his two advents. With these two important facts are connected all the curses and blessings of God's ancient people and of the world. The one conducts to Bethlehem's manger and Calvary's cross, and the other to the clouds of heaven and the New Jerusalem. Connected with the first advent we have the rejection of God's ancient people, the Jews, and their dispersion, under God's scathing judgments, among all nations; the preaching of the Gospel *as a witness* to all people, the calling of the Gentiles, and the gathering out of the world a people for the Lord, to be his kings and priests in "the world to come." Connected with the second advent we have the glorious gathering and restoration of "the outcasts of Israel and the dispersed of Judah," the pouring out of the vials of wrath upon the unbelieving and idolatrous Christian nations, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom on the earth. Correct views of the manner and object of these two advents of Christ are necessary to a right appreciation and enjoyment of Christ as the Saviour.

A striking lesson on this subject may be found in the case of the Jews, in regard to the first advent. They believed that the promised Messiah would come. It was universally admitted that he would come. Many devout people believed that the time for his appearing had arrived. The Scriptures had plainly announced the state and condition of things amid which he would appear. Many believed these announcements, and were anxiously waiting for his appearing. But many looked only for a triumphing Messiah, who was to deliver them from their oppression, and overlooked the *manner* and *object* of the first advent. They looked for the immediate realization of the Psalmist's declaration: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, *he shall appear in his glory*." They looked for him as a Prince and Ruler who would give great honor to the nation, and at once smite their enemies, "assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah." They looked for an immediate universal reign, in which he should take "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." They thought their own sacred hills would at once be made the scene and centre of his universal triumphs, because it had been written, "He shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously;" and "the kingdom and dominion, and greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the saints of the Most High."

Such seems to have been the almost universal opinion and belief among the Jews, at that time, in regard to the manner and object of Messiah's coming. They expected a Messiah of noble and princely estate, and surrounded by external pomp and power, such as they

Digitized by Google

thought became the Son of David. And they were not wrong in their conceptions of the coming Messiah. All this, and much more, had been predicted of him. But their great error was that they looked only at results, and not at the means. They were so absorbed with the idea of what they should realize in the glories of the mount upon which Messiah is to reign "before his ancients gloriously," that they entirely lost sight of the deep, dark valley that lay between them and that mount. They failed to perceive that the same prophecies which predicted Messiah's triumph and reign also predicted his sufferings and death. They would not believe that the way to the mount of glory, and that even for Messiah, was to be through the valley of humiliation. They forgot that, whilst it was appointed unto him to reign, it also behooved him to suffer and to die. They were so anxious to be delivered from the Roman yoke, and have the palmy days of David and Solomon restored, that they were offended at the manger and the cross. Their great eagerness for the expected deliverance blinded their eyes to the prophet's words that Messiah was to be "*as a root out of dry ground*," "*a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*." They were so filled with the glory which God had promised to the house of Israel through him, that they failed to see in their sacrifices and ceremonies the types of a better sacrifice, and that the blood that flowed from their altars pointed to the precious blood of Jesus, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." They failed to comprehend that, long before the predicted glory, Messiah should first spend a life of toil, and poverty, and wretchedness, and submit to the cruelties of his enemies, be nailed to the tree of crucifixion, and "cut off" for the sins of the world. And by failing to comprehend and believe ALL that the prophets had written concerning the promised Deliverer, they failed of a deliverer entirely, and rejected the only Messiah. Though "he came to his own, his own received him not;" and for this their house was "left unto them desolate," and for eighteen hundred years they have been suffering the judgments of God, scattered among all nations, their very name a by-word and reproach.

But shall we reproach the Jews for this, their error, in regard to the manner and object of the Saviour's first advent? "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone." Many professing Christians are guilty of the same error, in another direction. How many spiritualize and allegorize away some of the most solemn and positive declarations, which are as plain and straightforward as those by which the coming of the Messiah, as a sufferer, was announced to the Jews! There are those who preach the doctrines of Redemption, Repentance, and Faith very earnestly, who yet hate and condemn the great doctrine of Christ's Second Personal Advent and Reign, and warn their hearers against it as a pernicious heresy. And yet there is no truth more clearly and fully announced in the Scriptures than this. And are not such doing the very thing for which they condemn the Jews? Notwithstanding their zeal and sincerity for other truths, they preach only half a Gospel, and hold up to the worship and faith of their people only half a Christ.

The minds of the Jews were so occupied with the glories of Messiah's reign and triumphs, that they overlooked his sufferings and death, and hence would not receive him as the promised Messiah; and so many Christians confine themselves so entirely to what the Jews stumbled at, as to look only at the humiliation and the cross, whilst they set aside the crown and the throne, and are as much offended at them as the Jews at the humility and the cross.

And whence is this? Not from any uncertainty or indefiniteness in the manner in which the triumph is announced; for the Scriptures are just as clear, full, and distinct on this as on any doctrine they contain. It comes from a false system of spiritualizing and allegorizing the word of God, as the Jewish mistake came from a like perversion of God's plain records. It is high time, however, that we cease to tamper with the word of God, by forcing upon it meanings which it was never intended to teach, and to be assured that the Bible means just

Digitized by Google

what it says, and says just what it means. Our only safety is in interpreting unfulfilled Scripture in the light of Scripture *already fulfilled.* As to those numerous curses which the God of Jacob pronounced upon the rebellious Jews, were they not all brought upon them *literally?* Who, then, has the right to say that the blessings which the same God has promised to bestow upon these same people will not also be fulfilled in the same literal way? Or does God *literally* fulfil his curses, and his blessings only *spiritually?* When God threatened to scatter the children of Israel among all nations, and make them a by-word and a reproach among all people, did he not execute his threat *literally?* And if the scattering and reproach was *literal,* why will not also the gathering and blessing be? If the pulling down of their beloved Zion was a *literal* pulling down, will not the promised building up also be *literal?* If the threatened rejection of Israel was a literal rejection, will not the promised restoration also be a *literal* restoration?

And what is true of those solemn declarations in regard to the Jews is also true of those passages which refer to the manner and object of Christ's two advents. The predictions concerning the one must be fulfilled the same as those concerning the other. Christ's first advent was *literal, visible,* and *personal,* fulfilling the very letter of prophecy. How dare we then suppose that the second advent will be *spiritual* only, especially when it is affirmed that it will be as *literal, visible, personal* as the first? (Acts 1: 9-11.) At Christ's first advent, every prediction, even to the dividing of his garments, and casting lots for his seamless coat, was *literally* fulfilled; and how can it be possible that the predictions relating to his second coming will not also be fulfilled in the same literal manner? The shame was all literal and visible, and so also must be the exaltation and the glory. What right have we to say that Judah, Israel, Zion, and Jerusalem mean anything else than Judah, Israel, Zion, &c.? And yet, alas! how is such language turned and misapplied? The error of the Jews was in thinking too exclusively of Messiah's reign and glory; ours is in thinking too exclusively of Christ's sufferings and humiliation. And if it was a fatal error in the Jews to dwell too exclusively upon the predicted triumphs, ignoring the intervening sufferings, may it not be an error equally fatal for us to dwell upon the accomplished humiliation and ignominy, to the rejection of the true doctrine concerning the kingdom? The Jews ignored the cross; but do not the great mass of professing Christians equally ignore the crown? Is it not the practice of many to interpret the Scriptures referring to the first advent of Christ *literally,* and those referring to the second advent *spiritually?* If this is understanding "all that the prophets have spoken" about the first advent, it is certainly very far from understanding "all that the prophets have spoken" about the second. If we are right in understanding those Scriptures *literally* which speak of the humiliation, sufferings, and ascension of Christ, we certainly cannot be right in interpreting those respecting his second coming and reign in any other way. J. F. F.

THY KINGDOM COME.

ACCORDING to "the faith of Christendom," "the kingdom of Christ was set up . . . when the Roman empire was in its full strength;" that is, the "kingdom" in Daniel ch. 2, v. 44. This kingdom, "formed out of the Roman empire," was "to spread and enlarge itself, so that it should comprehend within itself all . . former kingdoms, become universal, and stand forever."*

The merit of this "interpretation" has been largely considered in a work written for publication, of which the following paper forms a part of the fifth chapter:

There are three lines of distinctive prophecy in the Scriptures, which, jointly and severally considered, are wholly against the attitude of Christendom in relation to coming events, and which are of more than ordinary significance at the present juncture, testifying as they clearly do to impending wrath.

* Bishop Newton on the Prophecies, 13th Dissertation.

Digitized by Google

Of the *Jews*, the *Gentiles*, and the *Church of God.*

1. Of the *Jews* first, as elect from among the nations, it is here said that, because of their profanity and wickedness—seen and foreseen—the anger of the Lord is gone out against them without remedy.* That the kingdom [generic of David] is taken from them in the person of Jeconiah, and will not be restored until He come whose right it is, when it will be given to Him.† But they are also told *when* and *where* He on whose shoulders the government is to rest will appear‡—who He is§—how He will come to them‖—and, in due time, by a special messenger from God, that He *has* come to them.¶ Yet they are withal certified by Himself in person that, instead of being welcomed by them, as He one day surely will be, He goeth, *as it is written*,** to betrayal, mockery, scourging, and death by them. And that, for this crowning iniquity on their part, vengeance will fall upon them to the uttermost;†† and "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."

2. Of the *Gentiles* next—the *Jews* being delivered over to them for dispensational chastisement—of "the nations" without God,‡‡ as distinguished from the Jews, now forsaken of God—of "the kingdoms of this world"—of the "four" kingdoms symbolized by the monarchical image in the second chapter of Daniel—of their "times," it must be said, a clearer line of testimony to a course of cumulative evil than is predicted of them cannot be made to appear. The dream of Nebuchadnezzar in that chapter is not "*sealed.*" It is as an "open vision," a thing of common intellectual note, which, with "the interpretation," and in the absence of traditionary haze and muddle, carries instant conviction to the dullest apprehension. It is, in fact, a revelation to "the *natural man*," which, unbeclouded by alien metaphor, no perversity of learned dogmatism can jostle into doubtful meaning. Say only, as it must be said, that the image there revealed is symbolical of *Gentile* times, and all things are at instant dissidence from "the faith of Christendom"—*all things show a downward tendency* until these times be fulfilled. There is no reading there, true or false, but as "the King" reads, v. 46, 47—of progress, indeed, but from bad to worse, and worst of all in "their days" (v. 44, margin) who shall be last in succession to him. No man can deny this to be the teaching of Scripture—who believes the Scripture.

3. The *Church of God* being "a new thing in the earth," is not spoken of in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Mention is first made of it in Matt. 16:18, where, under the figure of a *building*, it is seen to rise through "the spirit of prophecy"* upon the Rock of Ages. It is afterwards met with under various forms, but chiefly as "the body of Christ," or, more perfectly, "Christ"†—"the fulness of him that filleth all in all."‡ • The intimacy of this relation is vital and substantial—of many members to one Head.§ "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit."‖ "And of his flesh and of his bones."¶ Insomuch that, whatever of suffering or of honor is predicated of one member of this identity, the same is predicated of the whole.** "And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again [let it be remarked] the head to the feet, I have no need of you."†† And this body is said to grow—to increase with the increase of God, as above. There is an adding to it from among the *Jews;* there is a taking from among the *Gentiles* for it.‡‡ And to each and all of these chosen, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit withal."§§ So that, "Till we all come into the unity [margin] of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ,"‖‖ the "building of God"¶¶—"the habitation of God through the

* 2 Chron. 36:14–16; Deut. 31:16–21.
† Ezek. 21:25–27. ‡ Mic. 5:2; Dan. 9:24.
§ Isa 9:6. ‖ Zech. 9:9.
¶ Luke 1:26–33.
** Matt. 21:41–44; Luke 21:22.
†† 1 Thess. 2:16. ‡‡ Eph. 2:2.

* 1 Rev. 19:20. † 1 Cor. 12:2.
‡ Eph. 2:23, and 4:4–6. § Col. 2:19.
‖ 1 Cor. 1:17. ¶ Eph. 5:30.
** 1 Cor. 12:27. †† 1 Cor. 12:21.
‡‡ Acts 2:47; 15:14. §§ 1 Cor. 12:7.
‖‖ Eph. 4:13 ¶¶ 1 Cor. 3:9.

Digitized by Google

Spirit"*—will not be finished. In other words, there will continue to be added to the Church such as shall be saved, under the present general economy, from among the Jews; and as many as are ordained to eternal life, from among the Gentiles, *until Christ be perfected.*† A condition of things wherein, as some will be "alive and remain" to be "taken up" with the dead in Christ "which *rise* first," there must be Jews and Gentiles, *as such*, to furnish these living and "remaining members of the Body," until Christ who is our life shall APPEAR;‡ that is, until the setting up of that kingdom for which we are taught to pray—until the day of judgment.§

These three lines of prophetic testimony, therefore, really comprehend and are decisive of the whole question. For, if there be "sinners" of the Jews to *suffer chastisement*, and "sinners" of the Gentiles‖ to *inflict it*—if from each of these classes there be an *election* to "some better thing" than has been promised to Abraham—if these things have been, are now, and must continue to be, until the Scriptures concerning each and all of them shall be fulfilled—how say the preachers of a millennium without Christ that his kingdom has already come? A. J. W.

ARISE! the kingdom is at hand,
The King is drawing nigh;
Arise with joy, thou faithful band,
To meet the Lord most high.

Look up, ye souls weighed down with care,
The Sovereign is not far.
Look up, faint hearts, from your despair,
Behold the Morning Star!

---

* Eph. 2 : 22.

†. "On the third day"—one day being with the Lord as a thousand years; and a thousand years as one day. (2 Pet. 3 : 8.) The writer sees in Luke 13 : 23, and Hosea 6 : 1–3, a strong confirmation of the literal verity—"the Lord is at hand."

‡ Col. 3 : 4. § Gal. 2 : 15 : 17.

‖ Heb. 11 : 40.

EIN FESTE BURG.

The famous "Battle Song of the Reformation," composed by Luther, A. D. 1529. Newly translated, in the metre of the original, as a fit piece for our times.

BY JOSEPH A. SEISS, D.D.

A MIGHTY Fortress is our God,
A Shield and Sword unfailing;
He freely helps through all the flood
Of troubles now assailing.
The old Foe, unspent,
On what wrath intent!
Dreadful craft and power
He wieldeth at this hour;
Earth nowhere has his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Naught 'gainst him were effected;
But the true Champion's on our side,
By God himself elected.
Askest thou his name?
Jesus Christ's the same;
Of all hosts, the Lord,
Nor less than God adored.
Sure He the field secureth.

And should the world with devils teem,
To glut their fury on us;
Nor hopeless yet our cause we'd deem;
The victory still must crown us.
Let the lord of hell,
Scowl with malice fell;
Us no ill is wrought;
For now to judgment brought,
One word can overwhelm him.

The Truth shall stand, nor ever yield;
Nor thanks to en'mies for it;
'Tis Christ upholds us on this field,
With his good gifts and Spirit.
Freedom they may take;
Earthly joys unmake;
But when all is done
They still have nothing won,
Whilst for us waits the kingdom.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

LOVING CHRIST'S APPEARING.

To love the second coming of her Lord has ever been characteristic of the true Church. This is the test of her fidelity. Without this grace all her professions are vain and false. "The times of our whole hope," said Tertullian, "cannot be placed before the coming of Christ." Hence he exclaimed, "Our desires pant after the end of this age, the passing away of the world at the great day of God." "He shall quickly come and not tarry," wrote the apostolical Clement. "His Son shall come and abolish the wicked one," exultingly exclaimed Barnabas. And Ignatius wrote of Christ, "Expect Him who is above all time." And Polycarp indignantly denounced as the first-born of Satan all who denied our Lord's second coming to judgment. "Let us ever in anxiety and cautiousness," says Cyprian, "be awaiting the sudden advent of the Lord." "We are looking for Christ," writes Cyril. Jerome used to say that it seemed to him as if the trumpet of the last day was always sounding in his ears the awful summons, "Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment." Augustine testifies that Christ's coming and kingdom "is what we look and pray for." And Massillon may speak for them all when he affirms of the first Christians, they deem it "one step in apostasy, not to sigh after this return."

The great reformers constantly consoled themselves in the exercise of an ardent love for that day. The Scriptures, testified Tyndale, "warn us to look for Christ's coming every hour." "Long for the coming of the Lord Jesus," wrote the martyr, John Bradford. Piscator said, "The advent of the Lord is to be looked for with perpetual vigilance, especially by ministers." "Let us," said Latimer, "have a desire that this day may come quickly; let us hasten God forward." "Let us," said Ridley, "cry in our hearts, unto our Saviour Christ, Come, Lord Jesus, come." "We know that He shall return, and that with expedition," exclaimed John Knox. "There is one consolation," wrote Luther in the heat of his great conflict; "that is, the day of judgment is close at hand." And again, he exclaims, as though in an agony, "May the Lord come at once." Holding in his hand a necklace of white agates, he said, "I would readily eat up this necklace to-day for the judgment to come to-morrow." Melancthon (testifies Elliot) thought it became Christians to dwell much and earnestly on our Lord's second coming. "All the godly, with sighs unspeakable, wish for the coming of the Judge in glory," wrote Henry Bullinger. And Brightman wrote of Christ's coming, "The faithful, through hope of the future marriage, leap for joy, and greatly desire that day." Cradock on Rev. 22 : 17, says, concerning the word "Come," in this verse, that it all relates to Christ's advent, and declares the Holy Spirit in the whole catholic church, "All together wish and long for His second coming." The eloquent Milton, of our Lord's advent exclaims, "Come forth out of the royal churches, O Prince of all the kings of the earth." "Would it not rejoice your hearts," inquires Richard Baxter, "if you were sure to live to see the coming of the Lord? Would it not be the greatest joy that you could desire?" And he adds, "It would be the joyfulest tidings to me in the world. Hasten, O Lord, this blessed day. Alas! fellow-Christians, what should we do if our Lord should not return?" "Oh, why are his chariot-wheels so long in coming?" wrote Joseph Alleine. "Though the time be very short, yet love and longing make it very tedious," Samuel Rutherford exclaimed. "Oh, that He who feedeth among the lilies would cry to his heavenly trumpeters, 'Make ready, let us go down and fold together the four corners of the world, and marry the Bride.'" Thomas Vincent said, "This is the last and the sweetest in the text. Behold I come quickly." Bunyan calls the great day of God "a blessed and desirable time." "Come, Lord Jesus! thus beats the pulse of the Church," wrote Matthew Henry. "What comes from heaven in a pro-

Digitized by Google

mise should be sent back to heaven in a prayer—Come, Lord Jesus." "The servants of Christ," said Increase Mather, "ought not to have a servile fear of the great day of judgment, but rather to pray and long for it." "Let this illustrious day come with all its horrors," exclaims Doddridge. "We shall go from the ruins of a dissolving world to the new heavens and new earth, wherein righteousness forever dwells." In 2 Pet. 3:12, John Wesley thus comments: "Hastening on as it were by your earnest desires and fervent prayers the coming of the day of God." Charles Wesley sang—

"The Church in her militant state
Is weary and cannot forbear;
The saints in an agony wait
To see him again in the air."

And Dr. Watts—

"How long, dear Saviour, oh, how long
Shall this glad hour delay?
Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day."

Gentle reader, do *you* love Christ's appearing?

"THE WANE OF FAITH."

I was much struck with the article on the "Wane of Faith," in the "Prophetic Times," and as a somewhat singular corroboration of the views there expressed came under my notice lately, I thought I would also make it known.

About a year ago, I wrote to a Christian friend in Scotland, giving him my views upon the state of religion in Canada, and asking him how he thought matters stood at home? "There is not, in my opinion," I said, "five per cent. of Christianity in Canada. Do you think there is more in Scotland? Is there ten per cent.? Is there twenty?". My friend's answer struck me forcibly. His statement was this: "The condition of Christ's cause in Scotland at this moment is very sad; and look at what quarter of the world we may, we are compelled to say that it is very sad. For my part, I look for persecution, or a return of dreary Moderatism." A Scotticism for lukewarmness in religion. In a recent letter, my friend, without farther solicitation, again returns to the subject, and writes as follows: "The Established Assembly created fully as much interest as ours (the Free Church) this year, in consequence of the 'Innovation discussion.' The bulk of serious people whom I have met with, seem gratified that Dr. Lee, McLeod & Co. have got a church. I believe that McLeod, Blaiker & Co. are doing great injury to the cause of Christ in Scotland. They are all very popular with young men, specially young ministers, who are getting more and more impregnated with their views. McLeod tries to have a kind of sough (sighing of the wind through the trees) of the Gospel, but not at all hearty—awfully 'Broad Church.' Lee and Blaiker are both, I hold, unchristian men. They are both professors (*i. e.* of theology), and so all our young Established ministers can through them meet. Thus I fear the evangelical element is gradually becoming less and less in the Established Church. Would I could say that it is holding its place among ourselves. I cannot but fear it is not. The grand, sappy truths of the Gospel, such as the substitution of Christ, his righteousness, atonement, &c., have not that foremost place in the discourses of many of our young ministers which formerly characterized the preaching of our evangelical ministers. The prevailing cry is, that our preaching must keep up with the requirements of the age; by which they seem to mean that it must be with 'cheering words of man's wisdom.' Of course, there are many exceptions to this; many are faithful ministers of Christ; and perhaps in none are the grand fundamental truths ignored; but what I lament is, that with many they do not get that prominence which is, I hold, essential. Often, after listening to an able, pretty, carefully prepared discourse, when we come home and try to reach it, how amazingly little there is to hold by! And then you meet with a friend, and the remark is, 'Was not that a beautiful discourse we have had?' Perhaps I take too gloomy a view of things. I cannot help dreading there is a time of dreary Moderatism before us. Certainly, there is little appearance of vitality among us. The bones are *very dry*. 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.'"

The above remarks speak for themselves,

Digitized by Google

and prove my friend to be what I well know he is, a thoroughly earnest and intelligent Christian man, and one who seeks and cares for the abominations of the land. What renders the opinion all the more remarkable, is the fact that he is not a pre-millennialist, and that he almost, but I think not quite, believes in the conversion of the world.

ARE YOU READY?*

I TAKE the parable of the ten virgins as my warrant, and I address that question to every one. I ask you, "Are you ready?" Remember the words of the Lord Jesus: "They that were ready went in with the bridegroom to the marriage"—they that were ready, and none else. Now, here, in the sight of God, I ask each and every reader, Is this your case? Are you ready?

I do not ask whether you are a churchman, and make a profession of religion. I do not ask whether you attend an evangelical ministry, and like evangelical people, and can talk of evangelical subjects, and read evangelical tracts and books. All this is the surface of Christianity. All this costs little, and may be easily attained. I want to search your heart more thoroughly, and probe your conscience more deeply. I want to know whether you have been born again, and whether you have got the Holy Ghost dwelling in your soul. I want to know whether you have any oil in your vessel while you carry the lamp of profession, and whether you are ready to meet the bridegroom—ready for Christ's return to the earth. I want to know, if the Lord should come this week, whether you could lift up your head with joy, and say, "This is our God; we have waited for him; let us be glad, and rejoice in his salvation." These things I want to know; and this is what I mean when I say, "Are you ready?"

"Ah!" I can imagine some saying, "this is asking far too much. *To be ready for Christ's appearing!* this is far too high a standard. This is extravagance. There would be no living in the world at this rate. This is a hard saying. Who can hear it?" I cannot help it. I believe this is the standard of the Bible. I believe this is the standard Paul sets before us when he says the Thessalonians were "waiting for the Son of God from heaven," and the Corinthians "waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Cor. 1:7), and the standard Peter sets before us, when he speaks of "looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." 2 Pet. 3:12. I believe it is a mark that every true believer should be continually aiming at, to live so as to be ever ready to meet Christ. God forbid that I should place the standard of Christian practice a hair's breadth higher than the level at which the Bible places it! But God forbid that I should ever put it a hair's breadth lower! If I do, what right have I to say that the Bible is my rule of faith?

I want to disqualify no man for usefulness upon earth. I require no man to become a hermit and cease to serve his generation. I call on no man to leave his lawful calling and neglect his earthly affairs. But I do call on every one to live like one who expects Christ to return, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world—to live like a pilgrim and a stranger, ever looking unto Jesus—to live like a good servant, with his loins girded, and his lamp burning—to live like one whose treasure is in heaven, with his heart packed up and ready to be gone. This is readiness. This is preparation. And is this too much to ask? I say, unhesitatingly, that it is not.

Now, are you ready in this way? If not, I should like to know what good your religion does you. What is it all but a burdensome form? What is it but a mere temporary cloak that will not wear beyond this world? Truly, a religion that does not make a man ready for everything—for death, for judgment, for the second advent, for the resurrection—such a religion may well be looked on with suspicion. Reader, if your religion does not make you ready for anything, you may depend the sooner it is changed the better.

* From a Tract, entitled "WATCH," by Rev. J. C. Ryle. The entire Tract, embracing 35 pages, has recently been reprinted, and may be had by addressing "Prophetic Times." Price 10 cents. By the hundred, $6.

Digitized by Google

Editorial.

OUR CONFIDENCE AND OUR CAUSE.*

Since the commencement of this magazine, we have never, for one moment, doubted the absolute soundness of its fundamental principle, which is the pre-millennial and speedy advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A careful and long-continued examination of the only book in the world which speaks with authority on the sublime theme has satisfied us that this doctrine is *true*—a rock which cannot be moved from its place in the Divine programme in relation to the future of our world, by any process of interpretation or criticism which has in it the virtue of rigid honesty.

By honesty, of course, we do not mean in the intention of the interpreter or critic, but in the mental reception of Biblical truth as a REVELATION of things to come, and not as an *enigma* intended to tax the ingenuity of fancy and the resources of the imagination. We give the full credit of honesty of purpose, even to the mystic in his baseless dreams, and to the spiritualizer in his reinless wanderings; but to credit them with this is merely to believe charitably that they mean what they say, so far as their sayings have a tangible meaning. To believe, however, that their sayings illustrate the oracles of God, or make clearer the utterances of Divine Revelation, is a vastly different thing. We repeat, therefore, our settled conviction, that the reception of Biblical words in their obvious meaning, necessitates the conclusion, that the Son of man will personally return to His own world, and take possession of his rights as the Second Adam and Sovereign of humanity *before* the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. *That* is our position, all opinions, theories, sermons, books, commentaries to the contrary notwithstanding.

There are many of the excellent of the earth, devoted disciples of Christ, men whom we love unfeignedly as brethren in the Lord, who totally differ from us in this conclusion, with whom we should be glad to hold if we could, and against whose loyalty to the Scriptures or clearness of perception we would be loth to utter the least suspicion. If the possibility of such a thing could be avoided consistently with our deep convictions, it should certainly not be done. We instinctively shrink from even appearing to assume the office of teacher in relation to men whose superiority to ourselves is not only readily admitted, but so cheerfully granted, that we would gladly sit at their feet to learn from their stores of education, knowledge and wisdom. But, whatever construction may be put upon it, we *must* give our testimony, and the reasons for it. We have no choice in the matter. Necessity is laid upon us. To be silent, seeing that the Lord in His Providence has given us the opportunity of speaking, were to be disobedient, unfaithful, miserable. If any think we hereby gratify a desire for singularity, or a wish to appear better informed on a subject of the very first importance than some others who have had advantages such as never fell to our lot, they do us grievous wrong. Neither of these unworthy and unmanly motives actuates us. We avow, with deep sincerity, that our only and all-absorbing aim is, simply to bear testimony to the truth, as God has laid it upon our consciences to declare. The element of personality, or the spirit of sect or party, has no sort of connection with the matter. The question of the pre-millennial coming of the Head of the Church to invest His saints with glory, and rule His enemies with

* We transfer most of this article from "The Rainbow," a sprightly and valuable English Magazine of Christian Literature, having special reference to the Revealed future of the Church and of the World. It has not been in existence as long as the "Prophetic Times," but the convictions and experiences expressed by Dr. Leask, with a few changes and additions, present exactly what we desire to say to our readers. With these modifications we adopt the article, and give it place as an editorial of our own.

Digitized by Google

a rod of iron, until *power* shall have crushed the rebellion that would not yield to the amnesty of *grace*, is infinitely too great to be circumscribed within the miserable circle of personal opinion or sectarian theology. It is simply a question of Divine Revelation, and is to be discussed as such. Is it so written, or is it not? *That* is the question. We believe that it is; and, because we so believe, we feel bound to speak, whoever may dissent.

But, on the other hand, the publication of our Serial has been the means of acquainting us with facts of which we had little previous conception. It has revealed to us that there is deep dissatisfaction with current teaching on the doctrine of the Advent in the minds of many Christians; and that this dissatisfaction is on the part of thoughtful, earnest, devout, Christ-loving men. It is not among the half-skeptical, the constitutional fault-finders, or the small creatures of the Church whose only chance of importance lies in stinging their pastors, that this feeling is found, but among high-principled, educated, holy men, who are the ornaments of the churches, and the stays and supports of our very best institutions. To us, this fact is full of meaning, and deserves the careful consideration of thinking men and Christian ministers. The very class of people who want to give a reason for the hope that is in them, furnishes many whose faith in the complete evangelization of the world by the Church is greatly shaken, and who are consequently impatient of our pulpit and platform assurances of the great things ecclesiastical agencies and reforms are about to accomplish for sin-smitten humanity. Is it right, is it wise, to ignore the feelings of these men, and to repress their longings for greater light on the awful problem, by a foolish sneer at millenarianism, or the still more foolish quotation of a text which has nothing to do with the subject? Depend upon it, these yearnings of the heart in men who are the temples of the Holy Ghost are among the most significant spiritual phenomena of these remarkable times.

We have also discovered that there are many secret disciples of the doctrine we advocate, scattered here and there in our churches and pulpits. The confidence that has been reposed in us in relation to this matter is one of the things that has cheered us in toil, rewarded us for our sacrifices, and confirmed the expectation, that the doctrine of the Pre-millennial Advent of our Lord—the doctrine of prophets and apostles—will ere long gather around it a noble fellowship of saints, whose sublime position, in the midst of a sleeping church and a godless world, it will be to stand out, "looking for that blessed hope, even the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Some of these secret disciples have been encouraged by our Serial to avow their faith and to give testimony on this subject,—some, too, in whom these convictions were lying latent for half a century. We have spoken out the sentiments of their hearts, and they have welcomed our issues accordingly, and have become brave and decided enough to say that they believe with us, and have arrayed themselves among our most zealous friends in defending us and in extending our circulation.

We have also had repeated evidences that our publication has served to subdue prejudices, remove difficulties, clear away obstructions to the reception of our faith, and to make many converts to our doctrines, and, through them, from sin and skepticism to repentance and to Christ. We need not say how encouraging and satisfactory all this is to us. We look upon it as a hallowed proof that our Serial has upon it the favor of God, that we are called to a ministry in connection with it of great importance, and that we shall be sustained by the willing help and hearty sympathy and co-operation of those who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and look for the kingdom He has promised to those who are faithful to His cause. In many directions our doctrines are making progress. Those who believe them not are full of anxieties about their success. They are disturbing many, and have gotten quite too strong a hold everywhere any more to be sneered down, or to be set aside without earnest and serious grappling with the full plain word of God. There is still much honest faith left in the churches, and in that soil these doctrines are taking root, and there they will grow and bear fruit, till the Lord

Digitized by Google

himself comes. We are sure that the Holy Spirit is engaged in this work, and that it will accordingly go on, whatever may be the resistance made to it. And we are very thankful to the Holy Head of the Church, and to those of His people who have helped us with their gifts, subscriptions, sympathy and prayers, and devoutly implore the same grace and favors in time to come.

Let our friends renew their subscriptions at once, and unite their efforts to sustain our cause, prosper our exertions, and establish our monthly in its mission of usefulness in setting forth God's truth respecting the things which must shortly come to pass.

PRE-MILLENNIALISM.

THE TWOFOLD RESURRECTION..

We have received a pamphlet, consisting of forty pages, which bears the above title, written by Rev. Joseph M. Weaver, of Louisville, Ky., and published by Waller, Sherrill & Co., of the same city. It is a close and well-written Review of Rev. Mr. Dudley's pamphlet, which we noticed in our issue for September. Mr. Dudley thinks that Pre-Millennialism is a dangerous heresy, calculated to trouble and paralyze our churches. Mr. Weaver is of a very different conviction. He is convinced of the truth of the Pre-Millennial Advent of Christ, and its cognate doctrines He believes that they are scriptural, and tend neither to supplant the patience of hope, nor to the disappointment and sorrow of the Church, as some speak, nor give occasion to infidels and scoffers to shout in scorn and derision, Where is the promise of His coming? He considers Pre-Millennialism taught by the Scriptures, and not only reasonable, but consoling to the saint, and exactly fitted to arouse the energies of the Church, and to keep piety up to its proper working and watching standard. He thinks it a delight to work, believing that the Master is near at hand, and that the time is short in which to do for this Master. He claims that the great motive held forth by the writers of the New Testament for Christian fidelity is just this speedy coming again of the Lord Jesus. He thinks that Mr. Dudley's effort, though sincere and able, utterly fails in its intent; that our doctrines, so far as his efforts are concerned, yet stand forth as scripturally true; that they are based upon the everlasting Word of God, and, until the Bible ceases to be received as truth, will stand against all attempts to confute them.

In all this we agree with him most heartily, and congratulate him at having so admirably succeeded in giving the reasons for his belief. In literary and logical execution, his Review is fully equal to the pamphlet which he has taken in hand; and in exegetical strength and clearness it is vastly superior and more reliable. Indeed, in this respect, Mr. Dudley's essay is nowhere, viewed in the lucid reasoning and mastery of Scripture brought to bear against him by Mr. Weaver. We could wish that all the readers of Mr. Dudley's pamphlet should also read this by Mr. Weaver. They would then be in a position to judge properly in the case The issue is fairly joined; every argument is fairly met; and the result is a clear and full scriptural vindication of the doctrine of a twofold Resurrection as held by Millennarians. We rejoice that such competent and vigorous fellow-laborers in this cause, as Mr. Waller and Mr. Weaver, have been raised up in Louisville, and hope for much fruit through their endeavors. Could they not favor us with occasional contributions to the "Prophetic Times?" Our readers would be glad to receive their testimony through this channel also. In the absence of any direct communication to our pages from either of these brethren, we transfer the following extract from Mr. Weaver's Review:

"Rev. 20: 4–6. Our friends say, one plain, direct, and unequivocal declaration, that harmonizes with the general declarations of the Bible, must be received, though it does stand alone. Does this passage fill these conditions? I answer without hesitation—*it does*.

"1. Is it plain and unequivocal in its statement?

"A *plain* statement is one that is 'open,' 'clear,' 'unencumbered,' according to Webster. An unequivocal statement is one that is 'not ambiguous,' 'not of doubtful signification,' according to the same authority. 'This is the first resurrection. . . . But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were

Digitized by Google

finished.' Could any *statement* be plainer? more unambiguous? We know what 'first' means and what 'resurrection' means in their ordinary signification. Take the passage according to its grammatical and literal meaning, and I am bold to say there is no other 'plainer' or more 'unequivocal.' But I am told of the various *interpretations* of it—there are 'so many different and contradictory opinions' in regard to it. I ask is it not so with every passage of Scripture? Look at the history of *all* the passages of Scripture teaching great doctrines—*which* has fewer different expositions than this? The Divinity of Jesus Christ is denied, yet we have this plain statement, 'I and my Father are one.' Is not this a 'plain and unequivocal' statement? '*One*' in what? How many different answers? Shall we say then this passage is not plain? Shall we say the doctrine of Christ's Divinity and equality with the Father is 'suspicious' because *this* 'enigmatical' and 'intricate' passage has been brought forward to prove it? But we are answered—'There is an essential difference between the quibbles and perversions of an infidel endeavoring to undermine God's Word, and the honest convictions, however different they may be, of those who are diligently seeking to understand it.' Do none but infidels differ about passages of Scripture? Do not those who are *sincere* in their efforts differ often about a plain passage of Scripture? What mean then the different sects? It is the *man seeking* to support a *system* who *forces* a passage out of its plain *statement* to MEAN something else. It is a notorious fact that men in every age have *interpreted* various plain passages away. They were against them in their plain statement, hence they must be *interpreted* into nonsense—to teach nothing. This passage, so plain and unequivocal in its statement, has been 'spiritualized' into nonsense. Indeed, so plain and unequivocal is it that Origen and others, as I have said, who did not believe in a twofold resurrection, denied the inspiration of the Revelation of John! It was so plainly taught in this passage that they could not disprove it, hence they denied it a place in God's Word. To my mind there can be no stronger proof of its plainness and unequivocalness than this effort to cast it aside as uninspired. The passage then, in its statement, is plain and unequivocal as to the twofold resurrection, first and second; it is only the *interpreters* who have darkened and clouded it in their *vain* efforts to make it MEAN different from what it *says*.

"2. But 'does it harmonize with the general declarations of Scripture?' I answer emphatically, *yes*. There is not a passage, in reference to the resurrection, which is not in *perfect* harmony with this statement. We are referred to John, 5: 28-9—'Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.' Also, to Dan. 12: 2—'Many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake: some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' That in these passages is taught the resurrection of both saint and sinner is plain. Pre-millennialists do not deny the resurrection of either class; but do these passages compel us to the belief that all shall be raised at *the same time? By no means!* They are in perfect 'harmony' with the resurrection in Rev. 20. What is the writer teaching in these passages? Simply that *all* shall be raised. So says Rev. 20: 1-6. How? When? 1. The saints—'they that have done good.' 2. The sinners—'they that have done evil.' Here, then, in the *order* we behold the first resurrection, just as we have it in Rev 20, in the *statement*. Does any suppose that it was *accidental* that Jesus Christ (*as the Holy Spirit has done in every place where he speaks of the resurrection*) notes the *order* of the coming forth of the dead? None can believe this, for these words came from the *Source* of Wisdom, and hence were wisely spoken. It could not be by *chance* or without design. The Bible is inspired. All of it is truth. It was dictated by the Spirit of Wisdom. Every word proceeded from Infinite Wisdom. No passage was loosely constructed; but each passage is just as Infinite Wisdom intended, and is pregnant with meaning. Hence, when we find this truth mentioned in it, *always* and *invariably*, in the same *order*, we can but draw the conclusion that the Spirit intended to convey the idea of a twofold resurrection—the first confined to the just and *raised first;* the second to the unjust But we are told that '*ora*' shows that *all* shall come forth at the *same time*. Christ used it just as we do at the present day. If I should say, in addressing a congregation, 'My hearers, the hour—time or season (such is the meaning of "ora")—is coming when all here shall die—the righteous to go to the land of the blessed, the wicked to the shades of eternal night,' would it be inferred that *all would die at the same time?* By no means; but that *all* should *die*—yet some, it might be, in a day, others after many years. All that could be inferred from my language would be that *all* should die. So Christ simply taught that *all* (both good and bad) should be raised, teaching nothing as to the *time when*, except in the *order*—first, the good; then, second, the evil. But we are shut up to 'two conclusions:' We

Digitized by Google

are told—First, 'Granting that the resurrection hour is the Millennium, in the compass of which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice and come forth, *then the resurrection is an unbroken and continuous event stretching throughout that period.* To say that the righteous are raised up at the beginning of that period and the wicked at its close, is grossly *arbitrary.*' I accept not this 'conclusion' It is *not* 'grossly arbitrary' to say that the righteous are raised up at the beginning and the wicked at the close. *God says so!* Scripture best interprets Scripture. At the coming of Christ the saints are raised. 'This is the first resurrection.' 'THE REST OF THE DEAD LIVED NOT AGAIN UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS ARE FINISHED.' Here, then, is no 'continuous event stretching throughout' the Millennium. 'Ora,' in Greek, like 'hora,' in Latin, in its primary meaning, is a time, a period, and so it is used by our Saviour in regard to the resurrection, simply stating that *all* should come forth at some time. (For its use in this sense see Matt. 9:22; 15:18; Mark 13:11; Luke 10:21; John 4:23, &c.)

"But second 'conclusion.' 'Whether the resurrection be progressive or instantaneous, one or many events, one thing is incontrovertibly evident from the words of Daniel, viz, that while some arise to everlasting life, *along with them arise some to shame and everlasting contempt;* so that there cannot be any difference *in time* between the resurrection of the two classes.'

"How is it known that '*along with*' the righteous arise the wicked? *It is not so said in the passage in Daniel!* To say so is to 'beg the question'—to perpetrate *a petitio principii.*

"The same *order* is observed here as in John—First, the good; second, the evil. Some of our best scholars have rendered this passage in such words as more distinctly bring out the 'advent' view of a twofold resurrection. Prof. Bush translates it, 'Many from out of the sleepers in the dust of the earth shall awake; those (that is, those who awake, shall be) to everlasting life, and those (who do not then awake, shall be) to everlasting contempt.' But Prof. Bush's 'translation is a truckling effort to accommodate this passage' to Millennial views! and the 'President of Georgetown College' says that 'it is purely arbitrary and subjective, and was made to suit a preconceived theory.' So it seems that the author and the 'President' agree as to Prof. Bush's *motive* in the translation! How did they discover it? Prof. Bush has written a book *against* the Millennium. He denies the resurrection of the body at all, and holds, with the author, that the resurrection referred to in Rev. 20:5, is a 'resurrection of the spirit and principles, and the faith and the hopes of the sainted martyrs.' Yet he was forced to render the passage in Dan. 12:2 so that the idea of a twofold resurrection is distinctly brought out. Candor and honesty *as a critic compelled* him to do so. I presume no one will deny his critical acumen. But he is not alone in his rendering of this passage. Prof. Whiting says: 'There is an obscurity in this passage, produced by an improper rendering of the Hebrew words, "*ailleh, weailleh.*" They are translated in this instance, "some and some." Now, the phrase composed of the pronoun *ailleh*, with the conjunction *waw* (and) joined to *ailleh*, is the proper expression for *these* and *those.*' He then renders the passage 'And many from the sleepers of the dust of the ground shall awake, these to everlasting life, and those to reproaches and everlasting abhorrence.' Rev. Edward Winthrop also brings out the same idea in the translation, 'And many from out of the sleepers in the dust, &c.'

"These are scholars of no mean repute. None will deny the critical acumen of *Gesenius*, author of a Hebrew Grammar, recommended to me by the 'President of Georgetown College.' As a Hebraist he stands unrivalled. He testifies that the Hebrew word rendered as above '*designates a part taken out of the whole.*'

"Thus, according to the testimony of our best Hebrew scholars, Dan. 12:2 'harmonizes' with Rev. 20:1–6.

"Does not Rev. 20 'harmonize' with . . . 'for thou shalt be recompensed at *the resurrection of the just?*' (Luke 14:14.) 'But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (age) and the resurrection (ek) *from among the dead* neither marry, &c.? (Luke 20:35.) 'If by any means I might attain unto *the resurrection* (ek) *from among the dead?*' (Phil. 3:11.) These passages are in *perfect harmony* with Rev. 20:1–6.

"This passage then is 'plain and unequivocal' in its statement, and 'harmonizes with the general declarations of Scripture.' Hence it must stand as proving the Millennial Resurrection in its plain import, and the doctrine of a *twofold* resurrection is *taught by God himself.* So much in general."

WHAT THE WORLD THINKS.

A FEW months ago, we gave a commendatory notice of Mr. Shimeall's valuable volume on "The Pre-Millennial Coming of Christ." We have since had our attention directed to a notice of the same work in "The New York Times," which shows how the world regards

Digitized by Google

these great matters of the faith, and how rapidly and completely the temper and spirit of the days of Noah are again taking possession of the masses of our more active, intelligent, and reading people.

The writer of the notice in the "Times" admits that Mr. Shimeall "is well known for the extent and wide range of his studies, connected with the interpretation of the Prophetical Scriptures," and that he brings forward the names of some of the most venerated teachers and theologians of the day, under whose auspices the work appears; but he nevertheless speaks most flippantly of the work itself, and of the whole range of literature to which it belongs.

First, he observes "that the subject of the book places it beyond the pale of ordinary newspaper discussion." That is to say, that the great mass of readers regard it as a piece of impertinence to have the subject of Christ's return and of the regeneration of earthly affairs to be wrought at his coming, obtruded upon their thoughts—as one of those things not embraced among legitimate topics of human thinking. But why? Is it not of such account to deserve attention? Is not so marvellous an event, and fraught with such amazing consequences of every possible sort, to every human interest, and every human being, worthy of as much attention as eclipses, and censuses, and rates of gold? Is not the truth on this subject as fitting for as wide proclamation and as thorough examination as the building of monitors, the digging of canals, and the laying of telegraph cables? Is the record of wars and rumors of wars of more consequence than that of which these wars are only so many signs? Is the record of crimes more important to be made known, than the fact that the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven to punish criminals with everlasting destruction? Is it more desirable to know about the business, the politics, the amusements of the world, than to know that the present state of things is but temporary, and is presently to give place to quite another, higher and better order, introduced by Christ at his own personal return? If the politics, reforms, inventions, speculations, and everyday occurrences of this world, are of more account, and of more absorbing moment to the public than the personal advent of earth's proper King, and the preparation necessary to meet Him, will the "Times" please tell us in what that superiority consists?

Secondly, this writer affirms that Mr. Shimeall's book "belongs to a class of literature that cannot possibly be productive of practical good." But who has authorized him, or any who think with him, thus to sit in judgment upon the profitableness or unprofitableness of God's revelations? Who hath given him this wisdom to criticise and set aside the teachings of the Holy Ghost? Who is his God, and what his rule for finding inspiration useless? Does he not know that the Bible belongs to this "class of literature," and some of the greatest works of some of the greatest, wisest, and holiest of men? And as to the question of moral usefulness, does he not know that the second coming of Christ, with its attendants and results, is everywhere presented in the Scriptures as the very greatest incentive to every species of good living and scriptural morality and grace? Is the duty of watchfulness a practical good? The Saviour enforces this duty by referring to his second coming, "The Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants and commanded the porter to watch. Watch, ye, therefore, for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch." Mark 13:34–37. Paul says, "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night. Therefore let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober." 1 Thess. 5:2, 6. And so in sundry other places.

Are we required to be active, faithful, and diligent in the service of the Lord? These requirements are enforced by the truth of Christ's coming to judgment. The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14–30) and of the pounds (Luke 19:11–27) are illustrations. "Behold, I come quickly," saith the Saviour; "blessed

Digitized by Google

is he that keepeth the sayings of this book." Rev. 22:7. Again, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." Rev. 16:15.

Is love for one another a practical good? The coming of the Lord is a motive to the attainment of this Christian grace. "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you. To the end he may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." 1 Thess. 3:12, 13.

Is it a practical good for us to live holy and godly lives? The coming of Christ is a motive for so doing. Peter, having described that great day of the Lord, says, "Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." 2 Peter 3:11–14.

We are also exhorted to a patient waiting for Christ's coming; to have our conversation in heaven; to have our hearts established unblamable, and our whole bodies, souls, and spirits wholly sanctified; our hearts directed into the love of God, looking for that blessed hope, and encouraged by the promise of a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall then give to all who love his appearing. All this presents the subject of our Saviour's return as the great incentive to every pious and virtuous affection. How, then, does this subject "belong to a class of literature that cannot possibly be productive of practical good?" What is the motive of the "Times" to good order and practical righteousness? or is it entirely innocent of such aims or possessions?

But third, this writer thinks "this class of literature one that is gradually diminishing in number, owing to the general prevalence of information, and a sounder tone of thinking on Biblical questions." If he means that works on prophetic subjects are diminishing, his "prevalence of information" is sadly at fault in this particular. Never, in the history of Christianity, has there been such a multiplication of able and thorough books on prophetic topics, as within the last quarter of a century. Never, since the period of the Reformation, has there been such a widespread and earnest acquiescence in the doctrines of Christ's speedy coming and reign upon the earth, as at this very time, both in Europe and America. But, of course, as this kind of literature is "beyond the pale of ordinary discussion," this luminary of the "Times" is to be presumed to know not much about it, and, as an exponent of the world's way of thinking, to believe still less. And so it will be, as the Scriptures everywhere foretell. Such expressions from the world are themselves fulfilments of the very predictions which are thus ignored or spurned as incompatible with the boasted march of light which would supersede the Bible, or turn it into mere poetic utterances of man's own reason, which is its own oracle. Scoffers must needs come, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of his coming? It is so predicted. 2 Pet. 3:3, 4. And their presence is proven by such articles as that referred to; and the acquiescence of the mass of readers with such utterances is evidence that we have the truth, and that the day of the Lord *is at hand.* Milton has versified the Bible doctrine of the course of this present world where he says:

"Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, *and works of faith*
Rarely be found; so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, *till the day*
Appear, of reparation to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, *at return*
Of Him—thy Saviour and thy Lord."

Digitized by Google

WHO IS THE FALSE PROPHET?

ONE of our exchanges starts this inquiry, and expresses the opinion that it is not the Pope, nor Mahomet, nor the systems which they represent, but *Spiritualism.* It is certain that neither Popery nor Mahomedanism has ever performed the wonders ascribed to "the false prophet" in the Revelation. It is also certain that spiritualism claims power to do these wonders, and avers that they shall be done by its agents, whilst it claims to be an infallible oracle as to what is to be expected in the future. These lying wonders are certainly to be wrought by somebody, and these pretensions to prophetic dignity and authority must be set up somewhere; and to this hour the world has seen nothing so near the scriptural portrait as that which is being manifested by spiritualism.

The editor to whom we have referred, has recently had several interviews with the President of the World's Convention of Spiritualists, which is to convene in this city next spring, and has obtained from him a full outline of events for the future, as set forth by the spirits, and blasphemously claimed to be from Jesus of Nazareth. According to this oracle, a new system of government under a "Christ-band" is presently to be inaugurated; Christ is about to come spiritually to establish the kingdom of the spirits; Napoleon is to become the monarch of the earth; the Pope is to be dethroned in 1866, and to unite with Napoleon; a new divine order resembling Mormonism is to be set up; the sign of the Son of Man is to appear in 1871; an extraordinary young man is to come up whose works and teachings are to eclipse those of Christ; he is to be surrounded with an apostolic circle of twelve male and thirteen female mediums, who are to control events; he is to cause hailstones and molten lava to pour down upon the earth, and to fulfil the 11th chapter of Isaiah; and after these wonders the world is to have rest and happiness under the administrations of the spirits then fully enthroned These are the sorts of claims which spiritualism is now everywhere setting up, proposing to be the guide of men and the dictator of the policies of nations and rulers, and urging its pretensions with a plausibility to which millions are giving their adherence. Has the world ever seen the like in all the ages? Is not this, "the false prophet," rapidly advancing to his place in the true prophetic chart? Are we not herein made to stand in awe at the literalness of that "sure word of prophecy" which God has given as our guide amid the perils of the last puttings forth of the great Deceiver? Have we not here what "the Spirit speaketh expressly" concerning "the latter times?" 1 Tim. 4: 1–3. Surely the end is near.

HOW IT WORKS.

A SERMON was preached, a few years ago, in London. In the congregation were two Jews. After the sermon a discussion arose in the vestry on the subject of a Psalm which contained a prophecy respecting the restoration of the Jewish nation. The clergyman denied the interpretation of the national restoration. One of the Jews, who spoke for both, interposed and said, "Then how can you wonder that we deny what you call the incarnation?" The Jew then asked for a Bible, and opened it at that passage which contains the address of the angel to Mary: "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David," &c. He then invited the clergyman to go with him through the passage. The clergyman went through the first three or four clauses, and the Jew allowed the *literal* interpretation to pass. But when he came to this part, "And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign," &c. "That is," said the clergyman, "he shall reign in the hearts of his people." "Is that so?" said the Jew, "and not at Jerusalem where David reigned? Then I deny that Mary had a son; it signifies only that the Messiah was pure from his birth; that is the meaning of the Virgin having a son. I take your mode of interpreting this verse, and carry it back to the former verse, and deny the incarnation." "But," said the clergyman, "we believe in the *literal* interpretation of *this*, because the event has shown it to be literal." Then said the Jew, with an indescribable mixture of scorn and contempt, "Ha! *you believe because it is done; we believe because* GOD SPOKE." Reader, let us take God *at his word.*

Digitized by Google

The Prophetic Times.

Vol. III. DECEMBER, 1865. No. 12.

Special Contributions.

LUTHER ON THE ADVENT.

HOW CHRIST'S COMING IS TO BE REGARDED.

[Translated for the Prophetic Times.]

LUKE 21: 25–36.—The Lord here foretells his coming again at the last day, which is to be with great power and majesty. A week ago you heard of his ride into Jerusalem upon an ass, without pomp; where he did not have a place of his own, even a foot's breadth; and where he was crucified besides. This was a poor and sorrowful coming, in which he came not as a Lord, but as a servant desiring to serve, and so to serve as to die for us; as he himself says, Matt. 20: 28: "The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." In short, in his first coming, he rendered the greatest service, such as no angel or creature could, in preparing and making ready the kingdom of believers and the elect. But when the number of his elect is complete, he shall come again, not as a servant, but as a Lord; and shall come for the purpose of delivering us from the earth, worms, death, and putrefaction.

This is what he declares in this Gospel, and admonishes his people to guard themselves against false security, that the day of his coming may not overtake them unawares; and at the same time comforts them, that they may not be terrified on account of the signs which are to go before that day, but rejoice the more that their redemption draweth near.

In the first place, the Lord admonishes us Christians not to place the date of our lives here upon the earth, but to know that our Lord and Redeemer shall come from heaven, and thus to be prepared every hour to expect his coming; likewise, that we should be but half, and with the left hand, in this world, whilst with the right hand, and with the whole heart, we are in waiting for that day when our Lord shall come in his glorious majesty and power, which no man can describe.

This is the admonition and warning of this passage, that we may regulate ourselves with reference to that event, for there is no abiding here; and not conduct ourselves as the ungodly, who say: "Oh, who knows when the day of judgment shall come!" Such self-secure and godless people, whose hearts are engrossed with eating and drinking, and cares of this life, we are not to imitate; for as that day approaches, all will be busy building, making marriages, eating, drinking, and be quite secure in their own esteem; and with these things shall they be taken up as if there were nothing else to be done. Such people shall that day overtake unawares, and Christ shall come upon them as a flash; and just when they are most confident, drumming, leaping, and dancing, they shall find themselves unexpectedly overwhelmed, and given to eternal burnings.

This the Lord tells us in advance, and desires us to order ourselves accordingly. They that disregard it shall suddenly be overtaken. When they are most engaged building, rejoicing and being rejoiced, eating and drinking, and living in the greatest security, above and beneath shall be fire and brimstone. Just as it was in the days of Sodom; they ate, they drank, they danced, they frolicked, and did not care a farthing for pious Lot; as it also is this day with our towns-people, farmers, and no-

Digitized by Google

bles. Then Lot said to them: "God shall destroy you with fire;" but they laughed at him, and said: "You pious fool, what know you about it?" What happened? Early in the morning, at the rising of the sun, the sky became black, and a fearful storm arose, and the lightning flashed hither and thither, and in one hour they were in hell. So is it also in our day. People, when they hear of the day of judgment, say: "Oh, that I only had enough to eat and drink, and money plenty to last me till that day shall come, I should have well to do." But when they are fullest of treasure, and most wanton, and it is said to them: "Beware, the day of judgment is at hand;" and they laugh at it and say: "Ha, what a fool you are, to suppose the day of judgment near;" so shall that day break in upon them like a thunderbolt, which flashes in an instant from the rising to the setting sun. What, then, are those royal dollars, houses, chains, and sparkling show?

Hence saith Christ: "Ye, my dear followers and friends, go ye not with the secure and godless multitude, but watch. Your eyes shall behold how their hearts are occupied, and how they will laugh you to scorn; but watch ye; for the day of judgment shall come suddenly, as the lightning, from which they cannot fly. Just as a little mouse is entrapt in a moment, so quickly shall their calamity come upon them."

Such warning of the Lord Jesus we are to take to heart, and carefully mark. For we cannot help it, but must hear and see it, that everywhere people are so wanton; but let us have respect to the words of Christ, and expect his coming, and not turn our eyes after the doings of the ungodly and self-secure in the world; for the Lord Jesus faithfully admonishes us to expect his glorious coming which shall take place, when the ungodly shall be cast into the abyss of hell, and we, on the contrary, shall be redeemed from the earth, and from all the miseries we here suffer.

This is one thing which we are this day to learn, to wit, that we prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming, as we also confess in the Creed, that the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to judge the quick and the dead. For what is thus briefly expressed in our Creed is fully and overflowingly declared in this Gospel, which further adds how matters shall stand in the world as that coming of the Lord approaches, to wit, that Christ shall be neglected, and the preachers of the true Gospel be accounted fools, and the godless and undisciplined multitude give themselves to excess and avarice, as if this were the only business of life. Not that it is evil and wrong to provide themselves with the necessaries of life, but that they should not have their hearts "overcharged." If they did but charge their hands, there would be nothing out of place, for there must be work; but that they should burden their hearts, this is forbidden; that is, that they should place their hope and trust in becoming great and rich, caring nothing for Christ, and deriding God's word concerning the day of judgment. To have "the heart overcharged," is to be engrossed with temporal things, so as to disable it for conforming to the words of Christ; just as in our day, people of all classes are only concerned to know how to become rich, and apart from that care not the snap of a finger for the word of God.

Thus, says the Saviour, shall it be and go when the day of judgment is before the door. All the world shall be saying to itself, Peace and safety. Here do not mistake yourselves; go not with them; do not so misbehave; keep ye unto me; neither be alarmed; lift up your heads, and see, that when I shall come again from heaven, I may so find you with nothing wanting; for I shall come for your redemption. But whosoever shall overcharge his heart with things of this world, and not concern himself about that day, thus shall it be with him; he shall suddenly find himself among the dead. He who gives himself to forbidden pleasures and delights shall suddenly be overwhelmed, and he who is busy with his filthy lucre, shall presently discover himself, purse, money, and all, prostrate under the hand of judgment. So shall it be in those days, and so shall men find it.

A strong indication of our times, therefore, is, that the day of judgment is not far off; for to this is the world now pretty much given, and

Digitized by Google

shall be much more given. Everything is rearing itself aloft; the passion for display has no bounds; and so great is the confidence of the common masses, that they laugh the minister to scorn. They shall also become so confident in themselves, as not any more to endure sound doctrine, but to dash the book from them, and say: "Thou fool! art thou concerned about what is preached?" Of such sort are there already many among the people of town and country. Whosoever lives till that day will know how to understand these words.

Hence the Saviour speaks to his disciples: "Watch, that I may not find you among this barbarous multitude." If they shall say, "No danger;" in that same instant shall they be overtaken. Thus was it when Lot admonished his sons-in-law; he was derided as one that mocked. For so they thought: Oh, for many a day has this city stood, and for many a day more shall it continue! But before another day was passed, they were dead, and swimming in fire. This the world will have. It is indeed no fault of Christ; he has faithfully warned the world, and to this day permits his Gospel to be preached; but it is of no avail. They should indeed become alarmed, and say: "He who so preaches to us these things is not one to deceive us;" but they go on in their carnal security, and say: "I must meanwhile quaff my glass." On, then, against the words of Jesus, so shalt thou have thy deservings; thou wouldst not hear, I have given thee warning; hence shalt thou be suddenly overtaken. Then shall they have to say, It has served them right; but now they concern themselves not about it. But the Lord saith: "The day shall come as the lightning's stroke;" upon this we may calculate.

Thus shall matters stand before the last day, to the end that people may learn and not vex themselves, that things come to such a close, but say: "Christ has declared it in advance, that thus intractable, barbarous, and greedy, shall the world become." Thus was it with Sodom in the time of Lot, and in the entire world in the days of Noah. It is all said to us by way of consolation, admonition, and instruction, that we may be able to determine what is signified. The barbarous multitude understands it not; but we are to know, and to watch, that we do not fall into the same indifference. We must eat and drink, but not so as to overcharge our hearts, but lean them upon the Saviour's coming, and know that that which cometh is the resurrection of the dead and eternal life. Regulating myself by such a rule, I may alike sleep, wake, study, eat, or drink; and, come the day of judgment when it may, it cannot overtake me unawares.

Yea, it is our wish, for the sake of the present, that that day should come; for in this life the name of God shall not be hallowed, but more and more blasphemed; His kingdom is withstood; His will is not done on earth; our daily bread is being withdrawn; our trespasses continually increase, and temptation ceaseth not; therefore we pray: Our heavenly Father, Thy kingdom come; deliver us from evil. Help, O Lord; let the final stroke come, and make an end. If we will permit ourselves to be thus admonished, watch and pray, we may be confident that the last day shall not overwhelm us with dread. But all others shall be overwhelmed, and it will be their own fault; for they are not willing to regard the Saviour's coming as at hand; hence that day must overtake them suddenly, not for any fault in Christ, who amply warns them, but on account of their own guilt, in not taking the warning that is given them.

In the second place, the Lord comforts us, and incites us to rejoice, when we see the sun and the moon darkened, and comets in the sky, and all created things arranging themselves for change, and the usual order of things coming to an end. "When ye shall see," says He, "the sun and moon turning away their eyes, then has the time come for the death of nature." Just as a man, as his spirit is departing, only half sees, and rolls his eyes, is near the moment of his death, so, also, when the world rolls its eyes, and great changes are manifest, know in like manner that the time of its end has come. Lift up your heads, and be not therefore alarmed, for your redemption draweth nigh.

These are words which should be written in

Digitized by Google

golden letters in the heart, for they are immeasurably full of consolation to those whose hopes are fixed upon the life eternal. "When ye shall see," says Jesus, "that things are moving, that the world is breaking in ways of ghastly terror, be not dismayed, ye that are my followers and friends, but let them be afraid to whom it appertains." But the secure, untutored people about us concern themselves not about these things. And if there should even be three darkenings of the sun in one day, they would still lie in the beer-houses, and drink to the fill. Hence saith the Saviour: "When ye shall see that heaven and earth are giving way; that people are wedded to their wickedness, and that everything is being borne down by the current, then take heart and rejoice. Rejoice in what? Upon yourselves? No, no; but upon me, for I come. It will be somewhat alarming; for if I throttle the world, so shall it have a distressing look, and roll its eyes; but fear not, I am at hand, ye shall be delivered." Upon this let us lay hold, that we may believe that our Lord Jesus Christ certainly cometh, and that eternal life we shall have. When this day and hour shall come, however, we cannot precisely tell; but still we may know when it is near at hand, as the Lord says: "When these things begin to come to pass, know ye that it is not far off." Hence we are admonished every day and hour.

He gives us, also, *a parable of the fig-tree* and other trees; not an alarming and horrifying picture of fire, but a beautiful, joyous, lovely picture concerning the trees. When the trees now put forth, he says: "So behold in them, and take note, that now the summer is nigh; likewise also ye, when the sun is darkened, say: 'The trees are putting forth;' and when the sea roars and the waves thereof, say: 'This is the beautiful bloom upon the trees.'" An indication of what? That we shall be eternally redeemed. The world shall look upon these signs in the sun, moon, water, and earth, with reference to what they are to eat and to temporal supplies; but ye, my followers and friends, shall take them for beautiful flowers. Therefore shall ye be joyful, for the kingdom of God cometh unto you, that ye may have faith, to which end ye have been baptized, wherefore ye suffer, wherefore also ye are called and entreated.

These two things, then, should we learn, by way of increasing our faith, and having ourselves admonished and comforted. When we behold the manifold scandals with which the world abounds, we are not to turn ourselves to them, but guard carefully against all who move with them, like stocks and blockheads, and care for none of these things. To them shall the wrath of God suddenly come; but we are to rejoice, looking for the Lord, who shall come in the clouds with his angels, and deliver us from all adversities. This is what Christ has preached to us this day. God give us grace to lay hold of it and keep it! Amen.—*Walch's Luth.*, 13 *vol.*, *Cols.* 34–43.

LITERALNESS OF THE KINGDOM.

REMARKS UPON MATTHEW 26 : 20.

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

This text is considered by Protestants conclusive against the Romish doctrine of transubstantiation; for, although uttered after the consecration or blessing of the cup, the Lord still calls it "this fruit of the vine," and it is perfectly conclusive on this point, if the plain literal meaning of the words is taken. But in this case it follows necessarily that our Lord promises literally to drink wine, "new wine," with His apostles in His Father's kingdom; or, as the corresponding texts in Mark and Luke have it, in "the Kingdom of God." Nor did Jesus stop here; for in the subsequent remarks, recorded by Luke as made on the same solemn occasion, he said, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; *that ye may eat and drink at my table, in my kingdom*, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Luke 22 : 29–30.

The wine to be drunk is called "new," because then all nature is to be renewed. "He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." Rev. 21 : 5.

Such persons as believe that hereafter we are to be disembodied spirits, or are to possess etherealized bodies so entirely immaterial that

Digitized by Google

it would appear to be quite immaterial whether we have them or not, are mocked at the idea of food and wine being used by us in the kingdom of God, and interpret such passages figuratively, as referring only to spiritual nourishment. But it will never do for them to spiritualize the *new wine* in this case, or they will lose a proof text, a stronghold against Romish heresy.

Now we know that when God created the world, and placed Adam upon it, made in his own image and after His own likeness, "He saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."

Adam sinned, and his posterity fell with him, and the ground was cursed for his sake; but when Christ shall again return to earth there is to be a *restitution;* He will make all things new. "Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you; whom the heaven must receive until *times of restitution of all things,* which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." Acts 3 : 19–21. Now restitution is the act of restoring or returning to a person something of which he has been deprived; and "the times of restitution of all things" are the times of restoring the original state of affairs which existed when God pronounced it "very good." Then the holy dead are to be raised, the Saviour's incorrigible enemies are to be destroyed, Satan is to be chained, and the earth is to be restored to its state of pristine glory and blessedness.

As that eminent scholar, Dr. Trench, Archbishop of Dublin expresses it: "Beyond the day of resurrection, or it may be contemporaneous with it, a day will come when all nature shall put off its soiled work-day garments, and clothe itself in its holy-day attire, the day of the 'restitution of all things,' Acts 3 : 21; of the 'new heaven and the new earth,' Rev. 21 : 1; the day of which Paul speaks, as one in expectation of which all creation is groaning and travailing until now. Rom. 7 : 21–23."

If Adam had never sinned, and his posterity had also been sinless, there would have been no sorrow, no sickness, no pain, no death. Abundance of food was provided for them by the kindness and bounty of their Maker. And so those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb" "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more," not because they will not require food, but because "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters."

When our blessed Lord rose from the grave, he thought proper to prove his materiality, by telling his disciples to handle him, and see that he was not a spirit, but had flesh and bones like themselves. To doubting Thomas he said, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." With the same purpose he asked them for food, and ate it in their presence; but he did not drink wine with them, for as they well remembered, he had told them he would not do so until they should partake of it together with him in his Father's kingdom. And after this, with the very body which they had seen and handled, he ascended to heaven, and angels told his disciples that as he had ascended, so he will return. He will be glorified when he comes in power with his holy angels; but some of them had seen him glorified before, when, on Mount Tabor, accompanied by Moses and Elijah, "he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." This did not remove his material body, or render him ethereal and insubstantial. Why should we expect or desire to be different from our Lord? Is it not our blessed hope that "when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is?"

Many good people are perplexed by the idea that because the Bible speaks of heaven as the abode of the saints, our future place of happiness cannot be on earth. The only heaven I can conceive of is the place where Christ is; and when he assumes his kingdom on the earth, earth will be heaven to those who have been redeemed by his blood.

Digitized by Google

To say that all this is carnal, is begging the question, or, rather, it is disputing about words, not things. In one sense Christ's first advent was *carnal*, for "the word was made *flesh*, and dwelt among us," he was "God manifest in the *flesh*." But in the ordinary sense in which it is generally used, there is no more truth nor propriety in saying that these views are carnal, than to denounce as carnal the opinion that if Adam had not sinned, he and his posterity would have been holy and happy in the paradise which God prepared for them. When this earth shall be restored to the condition of Eden, and Satan bound, and sin destroyed, and Christ shall reign among his people king of nations and of saints, carnality in its offensive sense can no more be predicated of his faithful followers than of their Master. What we look for and hope for and pray for and believe we shall see is, "a new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." E. M.

"WHERE, LORD?"

A CRITICISM ON LUKE 17 : 37.

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken and the other left; two shall be in the field; the one shall be taken and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord?"

THE Lord vouchsafed no other information concerning this strange event to transpire at his *parousia*. The disciples naturally desired to know something more. Hence they asked, "Where, Lord?" And in reply, the Master indicates to what place the eagles will be gathered together; leaving the inference clear that the taken ones are identical with the eagles, although he vouchsafes no information, at this time, as to who they are.

But in our authorized version there seems to be a strange incongruity between the question and the answer, which has often impressed our minds, and has led us to a careful examination of the original Greek text. For it was already plain where the pairs spoken of would be, viz., somewhere on the earth; the point required was the object of the separation, and especially the place to which the taken ones would be removed. And our Lord's reply indicates this.

The difficulty or incongruity is easily got rid of. For 'where' read 'whither.' Whither, Lord? *Answer:* Wheresoever the *body* is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

The proper rendering of the word ποῦ is of great consequence in connection with the great and silent translation of the ready saints. The Greek word ποῦ signifies both 'where' and 'whither,' just as another word ἐκεῖ occurring in the same connection means both 'there' and 'thither.' In both cases the sense is determined by the context. In the New Testament ποῦ is translated by both words. In our authorized version it is translated by 'whither' in the following passages: John 3 : 8; John 7 : 35; John 8 : 14; John 12 : 35; John 13 : 36; John 14 : 5; John 16 : 5; Heb. 11 : 8; 1 John 2 : 11.

"'Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left;' and they answered and said unto him, 'Whither, Lord?' And he said unto them, 'Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together.'"

Here, as in many instances, our able translators did not perceive how the other meaning of the word could be applicable. And in general it may be remarked that in *many* instances where they could not see that the ordinary meaning was applicable to a particular passage, they have put it (being the true rendering) into the *margin*. It is on this account that a reference Bible (often called, in this country, a "polyglott Bible") is invaluable to those unacquainted with the original tongues, as well as for comparing similar scriptures. The constant use of such a Bible cannot be too highly commended.

If the word ποῦ be rendered "where," then the disciples' inquiry refers to those who are "left;" but if it be rendered "whither," the question refers to those who are "taken;" which is the true meaning, as gathered from the comparison of passages bearing on the Lord's coming as a thief. E. E. R.

Digitized by Google

Selections.

THE MILLENNIAL REIGN.

THE BELIEF OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

BY REV. D. D. BUCK.

It is, or ought to be, generally known that the doctrine of the millennial reign of Christ on the earth, ushered in by his second advent, and the resurrection of the saints, was generally believed by the primitive Christians who lived just after the apostolic age. The successors of the apostles, and those who had the best opportunities for becoming acquainted with their views, appear to have understood the book of Revelation as teaching this doctrine. And so evidently to the primitive Church did the Revelation favor this doctrine, so accustomed were they to appeal to this book to sustain their views on this subject, that the first serious attempt to disprove the genuineness of the book, was for the reason that it so evidently taught the millennial doctrine, as held by the Christian Fathers, that if the book was acknowledged to be the writing of St. John, the opposers of the millennium could not maintain their ground in the controversy; so they endeavored to bring discredit upon this portion of the Scriptures. It is important to recollect, however, that this did not occur until some time in the *third century*. Up to that period the book of Revelation appears to have been generally, perhaps universally, received by the Church as the production of St. John; and they also seem to have understood it to teach the millennial reign of Christ.

In "Horne's Introduction," we find this truth distinctly stated; though Mr. Horne himself seems not to have favored the ancient millennial doctrines. Speaking of the book of Revelation, he says: "It is a remarkable circumstance that the authenticity of this book was very generally, if not universally, acknowledged *during the first two centuries*, and yet in the *third century it began to be questioned*. This seems to have been occasioned by *some* absurd notions respecting the millennium, which a few well-meaning but fanatical expositors grounded on this book; which notions their opponents injudiciously and presumptuously endeavored to discredit by denying the authenticity of the book itself."

Now it seems exceedingly improbable that a serious attempt should have been made to bring discredit upon a portion of the Scriptures which had not been questioned during the first two centuries, merely because "a few well-meaning but fanatical expositors" had used it to sustain their fanciful views. In such a case, it is likely that a much easier, and much safer method would have been pursued by the opposers of the millennial views. They would have opposed *the many* to the "*few*" expositors; and the *solid, rational* ones to the "*fanciful*." It appears very certain that the millennial doctrine was too successfully defended by this book; and the advocates of the doctrine were too numerous, and—with the aid of Revelation—too potent for their opponents; and hence the endeavors to deprive them of a source of arguments which could not be successfully answered.

But who were these "few well-meaning but fanciful expositors" that could not be overcome in argument, without first depriving them of a portion of the word of God? They were, in some instances, the most immediate, and the most eminent, of the successors of the apostles in the government and instruction of the Church. They were, in their day, as the Paleys, Baxters, Wesleys, Edwards, Halls, Chalmers, &c., of recent times.

Mr. Barnes does not favor the primitive millennial doctrine; but, with his usual candor, he admits that "the opinion here adverted to was held substantially by Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, and others among the Christian Fathers." But who was Irenæus? He was born about fifty years after St. John wrote his Revelation; and in A.D. 178 he was Bishop of Lyons, in France. He must have been conversant with those who

Digitized by Google

had been acquainted with St. John. Indeed, we are distinctly informed that he was "*one of* POLYCARP'S *disciples.*" HE WAS INSTRUCTED IN RELIGION BY ONE OF THE MOST HOLY AND EMINENT OF THOSE WHO WERE THEMSELVES PERSONALLY TAUGHT BY ST. JOHN. And who was PAPIAS? Irenæus informs us that PAPIAS *was* "*a disciple of* ST. JOHN *and a companion of* POLYCARP!" He was also a *bishop.* The disciple of St. John could not have been ignorant of his master's views on so important a matter as the millennial reign of Christ. Papias himself explains how he became informed of the teachings of the holy apostles. He says: "But I shall not regret to subjoin to my interpretations, also for your benefit, whatsoever I have at any time accurately ascertained and treasured up in my memory, as I have received it from the elders, and have recorded it in order to give additional confirmation to the truth by my testimony. For I have never, like many, delighted to hear those that tell many things, but those that teach the truth, neither those that record foreign precepts, but those that are given from the Lord, to our faith, and that come from the truth itself. But if I met any one who had been a follower of the elders anywhere, I made it a point to inquire what were the declarations of the elders. What was said by Andrew, Peter, or Philip. What by Thomas, James, John, Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; for I do not think that I derived so much benefit from books as from the living voice of those that are still surviving."—*Euseb. Eccl. Hist.*, B. 3, c. 39.

And who was JUSTIN MARTYR? He flourished about fifty years after the death of St. John; and was undoubtedly acquainted with those who had conversed with John and heard him preach. He was one of the ablest and most voluminous writers of the primitive Church. Eusebius speaks of him in this manner: "This Justin has left us many monuments of a mind well stored with learning, and devoted to sacred things, replete with matter profitable in every respect." And who was TERTULLIAN? Born A.D. 160, associating with those who had been permitted to hear the immediate successors of the apostles, educated in the true Christian doctrine, and finally becoming one of the great champions of Christianity, he was qualified to judge correctly in the important controversies about the Christian faith.

And all these it is admitted,—PAPIAS, JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENÆUS, and TERTULLIAN, were advocates for the millennial doctrine, as then held by the Church generally. Situated as they were, could they have been mistaken in so important a matter as the pre-millennial advent of Christ and the resurrection of the saints?

But what specifically were the views of these eminent and unimpeachable Fathers of the primitive Church? "The opinion of the Christian Fathers," says Mr. Barnes, "with which the modern 'Literalists,' as they are called, substantially coincide, is thus stated by Mr. Elliott: 'This resurrection is to be literally that of departed saints and martyrs, then at length resuscitated in the body from death and the grave, its *time* to synchronize with, or follow instantly after, the destruction of the beast Antichrist, on Christ's personal second advent; the *binding* of Satan to be an absolute restriction of the power of hell from tempting, deceiving, or injuring mankind, throughout a literal period of a thousand years, thence calculated; the *government of the earth* during the continuance to be administered by Christ and the risen saints—the latter being now ισαγγελοι —in nature like angels; and under it, all false religion having been put down, the Jews and saved remnant of the Gentiles been converted to Christ, the earth renovated by the fire of Antichrist's destruction, and Jerusalem made the universal capital, there will be a realization on earth of the blessedness depicted in the Old Testament prophecies, as well perhaps of that which is associated with the new Jerusalem in the visions of the Apocalypse—until at length this millennium having ended, and Satan gone forth to deceive the nations, the final consummation will follow; the new-raised enemies of the saints, Gog and Magog, be destroyed by fire from heaven; and then the general resurrection and judgment take place, the

Digitized by Google

Devil and his servants be cast into the lake of fire, and the millennial reign of the saints extend itself into one of eternal duration.'" See *Barnes on Revelation.*

Whitby has made a strong effort to prove that the primitive Christians during the first three centuries were not all believers in the millennial doctrine. And he has certainly shown that the doctrine had its disbelievers and opposers from the very first. But does this prove that the millenarian doctrine was not the true and generally received doctrine of the primitive Church? Suppose there were unbelievers and opposers: what doctrine of the Christian Church, peculiar to Christianity, has ever yet attained to *universal* acceptance? Even during the lifetime of Paul there were some who opposed the doctrine of the *resurrection*, and overthrew the faith of some. Is it, therefore, doubtful whether the apostles taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead? Some disbelieved in the *divinity* of Christ, and some disbelieved in his *humanity;* but are we willing to acknowledge that either of these doctrines is of doubtful origin? Some denied justification by faith, and some at first taught the necessity of circumcision; but do we hesitate to speak decidedly with respect to what was, and what was not, the true orthodox view of the general church? It is easy to perceive from Whitby's own statement in the case, that the disbelievers in the millenarian doctrine were merely the *exceptions* to the general rule. He concludes thus:

"Here, then, we may evidently discern three sorts of men: 1. The *heretics*, denying the resurrection of the flesh, and the millennium. 2. The *exactly orthodox*, asserting both the resurrection and the kingdom of Christ upon earth. 3. The *believers who consented with the just*, and yet endeavored to *allegorize*, and turn into *metaphor all those Scriptures he had produced for a proper reign of Christ, and who had sentiments rather agreeing with those heretics who denied*, than those *exactly orthodox who maintained*, this reign of Christ on earth."

Just so: Whitby merits our gratitude for this honest conclusion. The HERETICS, who denied the *resurrection of the flesh*, would of course deny the *millennium;* for the millennium implied the resurrection of the dead. But shall we reject a doctrine because the *heretics* denied it in order to maintain their *heresy?* The *heretics* were not the *church*, any more than a *parasite plant* is the *tree* which it disfigures. As to the rest, they were of two classes: "THE EXACTLY ORTHODOX, asserting both the *resurrection* and the *kingdom of Christ upon earth.* 2. The *believers who consented with* THE JUST, and yet endeavored to ALLEGORIZE and turn into METAPHOR all those Scriptures he had produced for a proper reign of Christ, and who had *sentiments rather* AGREEING WITH THE HERETICS *who denied*, than those EXACTLY ORTHODOX *who maintained*, this reign of Christ on the earth." Precisely; and we have the same state of things now: there are (1) the *open heretics* who oppose the sentiments of the (2) *exactly orthodox*, who constitute the great body of the general Church. Then we have a class of (3) "believers" who "consent with the just," in relation to the genuineness of the Scriptures, and the authority of their revelations; but, alas for them, by *allegorizing* and *metaphorizing* all such portions of the Bible as, understood literally, would overthrow their erroneous doctrines, they hold "*sentiments rather agreeing with those* HERETICS" than with those "EXACTLY ORTHODOX!" "There is no new thing under the sun." Just as it is *now*, so it appears to have been at *first;* there were the *open heretics*, radically *opposed* to the *orthodox*, and answering to our *open infidels.* And there were the *professed believers*, consenting with the orthodox in the main, but by a system of allegorical and metaphorical interpretation of the Scriptures, they maintained sentiments more in agreement with the heretics than with the orthodox portion of the church; thus perfectly corresponding to our modern *Universalists*, and some other professed "believers," but, in truth, unbelievers in the true doctrines of the church.

Now, to close this unpleasant review, let it be recollected, (1) By what portion of the primitive Church the millenarian doctrines were

Digitized by Google

held; and, (2) By what methods of interpretation the disbelieving "believers" maintained their disbelief to the orthodox teachings of the Church; and, finally, To what result their allegorical expositions of the Scriptures led them. One word further. To which of the three divisions will the opposers of the primitive millenarian doctrine be likely to be attached?

THE MANNER OF CHRIST'S COMING.

THE manner of the coming of the Lord is thus described in Scripture. When Jesus returns to earth, a grand retinue of angels forms his escort from his Father's throne to a locality in the heavens, termed by Isaiah, the "chamber" (ch. 26:20); by Paul, "the air" (1 Thess. 4:17); by John, "sea of glass" (Rev. 15:2), as is evident from Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels," &c. So, also, ch. 25:31, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." At this point in the celestial journey a delegation, comprising the saints of all ages, meets the King of Glory, and the second stage of the journey is made with the glorified saints as a retinue. See Zachariah 14:5: "And the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

When King Immanuel comes to reign, he will not come alone, nor unattended. We can form no conception of the coronation glories when Messiah is invested with dominion under the whole heaven. All the holy angels escort him to some locality in the empyrean, where the flame-colored crystal—"the sea of glass mingled with fire"—is located. The transition from the Father's throne to this gemmed crystalline expanse, in the deep æther, is made without being known to the inhabitants of earth. His ministering angels gather to this Crystal Palace all the "sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty," "His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other," to receive their crowns of glory, and robes of honor and beauty, preparatory to sharing kingly and priestly dignities with Jesus in God's kingdom. This gathering, too, is made unknown to the careless ungodly world.

So far Jesus "comes as a thief;" yes, while the ungodly are working, and heartless professors joining in scoffing at the advent and its kindred doctrines, Jesus has silently, unobservedly, come to mid-heaven and gathered his saints—two are in the field, one is taken and the other left—two are in one bed, one is taken and the other left—two women are at the mill, one is taken and the other left. Gone, like Enoch from the antediluvian world, and like Elijah from wicked Israel.

From the grave, too, all the jewels are rifled. The treasures are taken from those dark, secret safes, as some saints were taken when the Lord arose; and foolish virgins, cold professors, and an ungodly world first became aware of the change, by the absence of "the pure, the good, and the holy." The heralds of the advent no more proclaim "The Coming One." The little broken bands that loved the theme of the Lord's appearing are mysteriously gone. Some mouldering heaps in the "green grassy graveyards," where past generations have lain down, bear witness that buried treasures have been unearthed, and all these arrayed in white robes come up to share with Jesus in his triumph. After receiving their crowns and royal and priestly appointments for the "world to come," the apostles receive the thrones of Israel, and other honored ones receive authority over ten cities, and five, as the case may be, and the last stages of the advent journey are made.

"The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints." "The Lord my God shall come and all the saints with thee." Olivet cleaves asunder as the once-pierced feet light upon it. From the sea of glass to Olivet, is the open, visible stage of the journey of the King of kings, when every eye sees him. Thence from Olivet to Zion. And how different from the scenes when Jesus was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief!" The agonies of a world's redemption once pressed Jesus here. Now an eternal weight of glory rests upon earth's royal king.

To conclude this hasty outline, the coming of the Lord seems thus arranged: From the Father's throne to a locality in the deep aerial, at

Digitized by Google

tended by the angels only; here all the saints meet him, and the cabinet of God's kingdom is organized; from the aerial he comes to Olivet (and some mysterious passages, like Isaiah 63:1, and Habakkuk 3:3, and others, show that his journey is made by Sinai, Paran, Edom, and Bozrah, destroying his enemies in his way. See, also, Revelation 19:20–21; Ezra 38:22, and others), when the great physical convulsion of Zach. 14:4–8, takes place; thence to Zion, where he is seated on David's throne to reign forever. Rest finally comes to poor, groaning creation, and an oppressed world enjoys righteous rule at last. This coming is a proximate event. Man has long ruled the world with an oppressive sceptre; but the succession of earthly dynasties have nearly run their course. The long periods are nearing a termination, and the signs have specially been displayed for the warning of this now-passing generation.

Editorial.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

See Luke 9:28–36.

It has been questioned whether we are to receive the account of the Saviour's Transfiguration as historic fact, or not. Dr. Furness calls it "The Dream of Peter." Dr. Palfrey considers it a mere visionary representation, to instruct and reawaken his disciples—a mere scenic view which had no existence in reality. Dr. Neander thinks that it had a basis of historical reality, but that it has been much exaggerated by the dreamy imaginations of the witnesses into proportions and intensity greatly in excess of the facts. We hold it to be nothing less than literal truth, just as it is written. How could three different men have exactly the same dream at the same time, and all three be so perfectly deceived concerning it, as to tell it in their most serious writings as a matter of historical fact? And what authority is there for receiving that as a dream which the record says did not appear to the witnesses until after they were entirely awake? "*When they were awake,* they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him." Men do not usually dream with their eyes open, and in wakeful consciousness. Neither is this the state in which trance-visions occur. Three Evangelists have recorded the thing without a single word to show that it was any other than a narrative of real events which they were giving. Peter, in his second Epistle, also refers to it with the express asseveration, that nothing of the nature of fable had the least connection with it; but that it was a matter of fact to which he was an eye-witness. (2 Pet. 1:16–18.) It is also part of the account that the three witnesses were standing upon their feet while they gazed upon the extraordinary scene; and that they were so terrified at a certain stage of the occurrences they were witnessing, that they were overcome, and fell upon their faces for very dread; which does not very well accord with the dreaming of dreams, and the seeing of mere scenic visions. Then again, if it was a mere dream of the three apostles, why did the Saviour speak to them so seriously about it, and charge them so particularly not to tell it until after his resurrection from the dead? Nay, more, if it was a mere matter of play upon the imaginations of the Apostles for their own particular confirmation, there are the still further difficulties: first, of harmonizing it with right principles of morality; and, second, of accounting for the very prominent and reiterated references to it in the New Testament. If they were deceived into a reception of a mere vision for historical fact, how are we to exculpate Christ from using delusion and fraud to confirm faith, or relieve the sacred histories from the suspicion of being, after all, a mere collection of fables and dreams? for there is not a fact or miracle in the Saviour's history that stands upon surer historic basis than this marvellous transfiguration.

One of the most illogical things in the world is this tinkering at acknowledged revelation. There is nothing more irrational than rational-

Digitized by Google

ism. If we are not to receive the Bible until we have first mended it, nor to admit its statements until we have rasped them into shape to meet our ideas of credibility, logical consistency would require that we refuse to admit it to be any revelation at all. We see no consistent landing-place between receiving it in its plain grammatical meaning, or putting it upon the same level with other books. And as we are satisfied that it is given by inspiration of God, we must also insist on what it relates as being that which its writers represent it to be. We therefore receive this account as true, and proceed to notice a few points concerning it.

I. THE PLACE.—There is much said in Scripture about mountains. Some of the most sublime of sacred scenes occurred on mountains. The Law was given from a mountain. The great sermon with which the Saviour ushered in the Christian system was delivered on a mountain. A great part of Christ's prayers were offered on mountains. He was transfigured on a mountain, crucified on something of a mountain, ascended to heaven from a mountain, and when he returns again to earth, he will appear upon a mountain; for "his feet shall stand upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east."

There seems to be something in mountain scenery fitted to the sacred and divine. Mountains are nature's symbols of the majesty of God. They easily connect with his everlasting strength, purity, and glory. His dispensations for the good of man have, therefore, been largely connected with mountains. There is hardly a peak in all the region of the Holy Land, which has not become associated with something sacred. Moriah, Horeb, Sinai, Zion, Hermon, Tabor, Calvary, Olivet,—all are classic hills. Their summits are invested with a religious interest and sublimity as striking and durable as their own rocky elevations. From these high places, connecting so closely with heaven, our imaginations thrill and bound in sublimer enthusiasm than did ever the fancy of the Greek from Parnassus, Ida, Pelion, or Olympus.

It is inferred from several particulars, that it was evening when the mountain was ascended. The quiet hour of nightfall is that which the Saviour ordinarily selected for retirement to the woods and mountains for devotion, and this is a season peculiarly fitted for solemn thought. Isaac took this time for his holy meditations. But notice,—

II. THE WITNESSES PRESENT—not all the disciples, but only "Peter, James, and John his brother." Christ omitted to take the others, not because they were not to know anything of the transfiguration, but because these three were the fittest to be the witnesses of it, as they also occupied a position of particular nearness to the Saviour. There were different grades and ranks among his followers in these respects. He was the centre of different circles which widened upon each other, and to which different degrees of direct manifestation were apportioned. More was given to the twelve, than to his followers generally; and still more to the three, than to the twelve; and to Peter, perhaps, more than to the three. These differences were regulated, perhaps, by differences of natural character and adaptation, or by differences of moral worth and attainment, or by both. At any rate, Peter, James and John were the Saviour's most immediate and confidential friends. To them he afforded privileges beyond all others, not out of mere capricious partiality, but as the best arrangement which he could make for the letting forth to the world of some of the great facts upon which Christianity is founded. They alone were present when the daughter of Jairus was raised. They alone beheld the agony of the garden. They alone were the witnesses of the transfiguration.

III. Notice WHAT OCCURRED.—The record says that "*he was transfigured before them.*" His whole appearance was changed. There was the Master, in the midst of the darkness, but resplendent and glorious; quite altered from what he had before been seen. He was *transfigured*—changed in form—as Matthew says, *metamorphosed.* "The fashion of his countenance was altered; his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment became white, shining, exceeding white, white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them, glistening, white as the light."

Digitized by Google

When Moses was in Mount Sinai with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, his face also became luminous in his near communion with God; but not so luminous and glorious as in this case. Not only the Saviour's face, but his whole person, and even his garments, streamed with light and glory. So transcendent and intense was the divine splendor that permeated and enveloped him, that the Evangelists seem to be at a loss for words and images to describe it. They seem to labor in the effort more than in anything else which they have put on record, and pile together the intensest terms and figures known to man, to express the glory which was there manifested in the person of their Master. They use the three literal terms, "white," "shining," "glistening."

But to the literal terms they add figurative illustrations. The Saviour's garments were not only "white," but "*white as no fuller on earth could white them*"—"*exceeding white as* SNOW." Nay, still more, from the earth the illustration rises to the sky. "His face did shine *as the sun*, and his garments were *white as the light*—divinely, miraculously white. A proof and picture this of the Saviour's high and peculiar relations to the eternal God, who is light, and in whom there is no darkness at all. Never was there a being on earth that ever exhibited such glory as that which there shone through him.

IV. Notice WHEN THIS OCCURRED.—It was "as he prayed" that he was transfigured. Prayer was the habit of Christ. He ascended this Mount on this occasion "to pray." And it is said that he did pray there. Upon that dark and solitary Mount the Saviour knelt with the three favored ones. From that high altar, made sacred by his presence, his voice went up to his Father and our Father—to his God and our God. From among the rocks his fervent supplications ascended. And in answer to those prayers, and by means of them, this wonderful transfiguration came. Prayer is a transfiguring power.

V. Notice THE PERSONS WHO APPEARED WITH CHRIST.—However alone we may seem to be in our devotions, we are never alone. Beings of another world there join us. It was so here. "There appeared unto them Moses and Elias;" and the disciples "saw the two men that stood with him." They were not angels, but "*men*." They were not mere phantoms or scenic shadows, but real, living beings, for they "*talked*." And what is more, they were men who once lived in the flesh, with like passions with us, but who about a decade of centuries before had wholly disappeared from the earth. They were great men—men who distinguished themselves in serving God on earth, and who were accordingly lifted to peculiar honors in heaven. One was *Moses*, that persevering man of God, who chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"—the faithful leader, lawgiver, and deliverer of Israel, who had been dead for more than a thousand years. The other was the once persecuted *Elijah*, that fearless reprover of kings, and dauntless adversary of Baal, who, as a reward for his fidelity, about eight hundred years before had been caught up to heaven in the chariot of God without ever tasting of death.

The appearance of these personages on this occasion is full of mystery. We can tell very little about it. But it is fraught with most important and consolatory suggestion. It shows that death is not the end of us—that there is another life—and that that life is one of consciousness and activity.

It shows us, furthermore, that the abode of the dead is not far from us,—that for aught we know it is all around us.

It shows, furthermore, that those who have passed into the state of the departed are still interested in the affairs that are transpiring on earth—especially in the progress of the great work of salvation.

VI. Notice THE DESIGN OF THIS WONDERFUL OCCURRENCE.—All the objects contemplated by it we cannot now understand.

It evidently had important connections with Christ's own personal development into that perfectness of qualification for the mediatorship which was necessary. He "*grew* in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men," and there was also growth in his Christhood.

It was also meant to confirm his disciples, and to fortify them against the dangers they

Digitized by Google

were in of having their confidence in his Messiahship destroyed by the sufferings upon which he was about to enter.

But it was more especially designed to be an earnest and model of Christ's future "coming and kingdom," when he shall come in his glory, and "shall sit upon the throne of his glory." This is to be gathered from the narrative itself. A week before it occurred, he told his disciples that "the Son of man shall come in the glory of the Father, with his angels or *messengers* with him;" and that there were some standing there when he made the declaration who "*should not taste of death till they saw the Son of man coming in his kingdom.*" This coming in his kingdom, which some of the disciples were to live to see, is not the final advent; for the disciples are all dead, and the final advent is still future. Neither is it the destruction of Jerusalem; for but one of the apostles lived to see that catastrophe, and the Son of man did not then come in his kingdom. And yet some of the apostles were to have ocular demonstration of the Son of man's coming in his kingdom before tasting of death. Search through apostolic history as we will, we shall find nothing but the transfiguration to which the Saviour's words will apply. That, then, was, in some sense, the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom. It was not, indeed, the coming itself, but it was an earnest and picture of it. It was the coming of the Son of man in his kingdom, as the bread and wine in the Eucharist are Christ's body and blood. Peter says "the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" are not "cunningly-devised fables." He declares that he was certified of their reality by the testimony of his own senses. "We were *eye-witnesses*," says he, "*when we were with him in the holy mount.*" We thus have clear inspired testimony that the scene of the transfiguration was a demonstrative exhibition of the coming of Jesus in his kingdom. Hence, whatever we find in the descriptions of that scene, we may confidently expect to be realized in that "world to come whereof we speak." As Christ appeared in that glorious scene, so he will appear when he returns to this world. As he was then personally present as the Son of man, so he will be personally present in the millennial kingdom. And as he was there attended by different classes of persons, so will his glorious kingdom consist of similar classes. The first will be the saints who had fallen asleep, then raised up, and joined to their ever-living Head, represented by Moses. The second class will be the saints who "are alive and remain" to that time, who then "shall be caught up together with" the resurrected saints, to "be ever with the Lord" without dying at all, as represented by Elijah. These two classes are to be with Christ "in glory," and occupy a peculiar nearness to him, and live a supernatural and angelic sort of life, in which they will be visible or invisible to people in the flesh as the case may require, and shall neither marry, nor be given in marriage. But at the same time there will be another class—people living in the flesh, on the earth, in the natural life, represented in this picture by Peter, James, and John.

How full of light, comfort and hope are these Scriptures! What joys and wonders they set before us as the fruit of the Saviour's interposition for our redemption! Let us cherish these things, and firmly believe them. For this hope maketh not ashamed.

And what a blessed thing is prayer! What glory and bliss it brought to Jesus and his three disciples on this occasion! How near and close it brought the majesty of the Divine presence! How it made Jesus overflow with the brightness of in-dwelling Godhead! How it opened the heavens, disclosed to mortal view some of its inhabitants, and rendered audible the conversations of the saints in glory, and the words of the great God himself! How it made the disciples thrill with delight for which Peter was willing to abandon everything, and stay there in the cold bleak mountain forever! Nor is there one in all this world, who is earnest and persevering in his prayers, but shall thereby in time be transfigured into the same celestial radiance with Jesus, and see him in his glory, and hear the redeemed conversing together along the eternal hills, and rejoice forever in the light of God and the Lamb.

Digitized by Google

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

THE subject of a congress of nations is still agitated in Europe. The French foreign minister has made known to the ministers of Prussia and Austria that France adheres to the conviction that the Roman and Schleswig-Holstein question can only be solved by means of such a congress, and that her efforts to bring about such a convention are likely soon to be successful, when all the political difficulties of Europe are to be canvassed and settled.

The Schleswig-Holstein matter has assumed a form which it is supposed must sooner or later bring on a collision and a general disturbance in European affairs.

The telegraphic line between Beirout and Cairo, through Palestine, is now completed, and telegrams are being exchanged between Egypt and Syria.

Dr. Zimple announces, in a recent pamphlet, his failure to obtain a concession from the Turkish government for the construction of his proposed railroad from Joppa to Jerusalem, &c. He now appeals to Christians and Jews and all the Christian governments to unite in one grand effort to recover Palestine from Turkish dominion. He thinks it can easily be accomplished, and the independence of semi-savage Canaan secured. We have as little hope from his efforts in this direction as we had of his projected railroad.

In the recent visit of Napoleon to Algeria, in reply to an address made to him by a Jewish rabbi of that country, the Emperor said: "Soon, I hope, the Algerian Israelites will be French citizens." Since then, the members of the Israelitish Consistory of Oran have addressed their brethren in Algeria, congratulating them on "the ineffable happiness" vouchsafed to them in those "august words," and urging them to accept the offer, with all the conditions imposed by "that noble name," Napoleon III. They say: "You are aware, that to the Israelite, the law of the state has the force of a religious law. Henceforward French, after your struggles for so many ages, the Eternal hearing your tears and prayers, *the greatest and justest of princes* has opened to you the finest country in the world. Its laws will be your laws, as its destinies have been your destinies." This may serve to indicate what sort of impression is being made upon a large portion of the Jewish mind with respect to Napoleon and his disposition and capacity to do for that remarkable people.

A Bavarian Jew writing from London to the *Israelite Indeed*, has a statement upon the process of the restoration to Palestine, which is worthy of note. He says: "The re-gathering of the Jews is now beginning to take place. Not only many single families immigrate to Palestine, but there have been formed a number of societies in almost every land on this continent, to prepare an immigration on a large scale, provided with all possible means, money, implements, and tools, of every kind, to commence the cultivation of the long-desolated land, at once, and with the utmost vigor. There are men of considerable wealth among them, and not one without some means, enough at least to defray the expenses of the journey, and to purchase a plot of ground. I am happy to state that I am one of the leading members of a society forming here in Bavaria, which numbers already over nine hundred heads of families, besides a number of young people who would not form an alliance with the other sex, until settled in the Holy Land, upon the soil of their rightful heritage." He also adds: "The Gentiles hereabouts—that is, in the petty German Protestant kingdoms and principalities—are even more astir about Palestine than the Jews."

Dr. Leask, in the *Rainbow*, for September last, notices a recent publication in England, the manuscript of which was written five years ago, in which Napoleon III is set forth as most seriously scheming the entire conquest of Europe and of the world. The following extract is given as having been one of the utterances of the great adventurer before he came into power:

"When all the world is nearly in my hands, I'll bring it all to bear against Great Britain. She is all scattered; I concentrated. Everywhere her commerce shall be attacked, her colonies invaded, her seaports stormed. Elec-

Digitized by Google

tric wires shall flash my orders at a given moment, rise in all climes, and crush Great Britain. She shall go down, and I will reign supreme throughout the world. Builder and architect of my own fortune! Happier than Napoleon's son, and greater; greater than he himself! I will transcend his glory! Never name shall be like my name! The image of all glory shall be my image! I, that great reality, like unto God, my power universal—But soft—I dream—I am but a captive now! Well, well, all's one for that! I'll let time shape; and there—an end. Now to my studies!"

"Thus," says the writer, "he sat him down. He knew not it is writ: 'This matter is by a decree of the vouchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones; to the extent that the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.'"

It is affirmed, in recent accounts from Italy, that a direct communication has been going on between Napoleon and Victor Emanuel in a very secret manner—not a written, but a verbal communication—by means of a faithful and intelligent agent. A General of the army has been for some time past in the habit of running over the Franco-Italian frontier under the pretext that he has to make strategetical observations. This General has been the agent in carrying on the secret discussion. Do you ask the object of all this? The object has been simply and solely to discuss an arrangement with the Pope, which shall put an end to the occupation of Rome by the French, and bring about a reconciliation of the Papacy with the kingdom of Italy; and, lastly, to effect the commercial treaty with Austria, which implies a direct recognition of the Kingdom of Italy on the part of Austria.

It is also rumored in the religious circles, that very strange and important measures and changes are maturing, of such gravity and importance, that a French religious journal declares it impossible to give them publicity through the press. It is said that the choice of a new Pontiff has already been made or resolved upon; but that Pius IX will not tender his resignation until he has obtained a secret pledge from all the members of the Sacred Council that their votes will be given to an illustrious layman, who at one sitting would be made a Priest, a Bishop, and a Cardinal. This much is certain: amongst all these remarkable hypotheses (and religious journals confess it, among others the *Union de l' Ouest*), that some great events are expected to occur in Rome very soon.

Pius IX frequently lets escape him references to the approaching eventuality, and in coming out of his oratory, his most intimate prelates, from day to day, gather indications which make clear the situation, and show that the Holy Father no longer attempts to deceive himself as to the future. These are the last death-rattles of the temporal power.

It is also worthy of notice in this connection, that soon after the last Encyclical of the Pope was promulged, so fiercely condemning all the ideas of progress, and the authority of peoples, which enter so largely into Napoleonism, there appeared a pamphlet, written by M. Caylu, called "*César Pontife*," in which the following passage occurs: "*Let Cæsar then be Pontiff;* not, however, in the sense commonly attributed to the word, but as the director, or rather the Protector, of the national Church regenerated, recognized, and approved by a council. Such, according to us, is the only answer to the Encyclical. The question of orthodoxy or of schism is not in our competency; and besides, may not people break with the temporal power of the Pope-king without becoming Protestants? Has not the Encyclical of Pius IX shut up the source of diplomatic compromise? We accept the challenge, and we answer in words as terrible to the temporal Papacy as those which the hand of the angel traced on the palace walls of the King of Babylon,—CÆSAR PONTIFF! To great evils we must apply great remedies. If there be any other solution, serious and possible, we should be glad to hear of it, and to accept it beforehand. If there be none, then the state must look to it without delay; for the civil authority and liberty of conscience are imperilled."

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Dr Sibbs. 90

Spiritualizing Interpretations 79-

Polycarps hearing the voice. 97

Digitized by Google

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
walt,cls v.3

The Prophetic times.

3 1951 002 805 053 V

WILSON
ANNEX
[redacted]